"AND THEY THOUGHT WE WOULDN'T FIGHT"

FLOYD GIBBONS

Not Transferable.

Instructions on Back.

This pass must be returned to the office of the assistant Provost Marshal, Paris

PASS

Period during which available.

From July 23/18

To August 23/18

The person named below is permitted to pass within the area occupied by the American Army with or without a motorcycle or car during the period stated hereon.

This Pass is not to be accepted if the name originally entered on it is erased and another name substituted.

LAISSER-PASSER

Valable du

au

La personne nommée ci-dessous est autorisé à circuler dans la zône occupée par l'Armée Américaine avec ou sans motocyclette ou voiture automobile pendant la période spécifiée ci-dessus.

Cette carte cesse d'être valable au cas où le nom du porteur serait effacé et remplacé par un autre nom.

Name Floyd Gibbons, Accredited Correspondent

Unit U.S.A.

Signature and Stamp of Issuing Officer.

ASSISTANT PROVOST MARSHAL 18 JUIL 1918 A.E.F.

F. A. T. Barker
Maj. U.S.M.C.
A.P.M.

INSTRUCTIONS.

This Pass to be shown when demanded.

It is not transferable and must be signed by the bearer.

No Pass is valid unless stamped with a special Pass Stamp of an A. P. M. and the Rank, and appointment of the issuing Officer is added after his signature.

If issued for a short period only, the word "temporary" must be written on the face of the Pass.

The Loss of a Pass or the finding of a Pass is to be reported at once to the A. P. M. of the nearest formation.

INSTRUCTIONS.

Ce laisser-passer devra être présenté à toute réquisition

Il est strictement personnel et doit porter la signature du titulaire.

Aucun laisser-passer n'est valable à moins de porter la griffe spéciale de l' "Assistant Provost Marshal" ainsi que la signature de l'Officier qui le délivre, suivie des grade, corps ou emploi de ce dernier.

Au cas où le présent laisser-passer ne serait délivré que pour peu de temps, le mot "temporary" devrait y être écrit au recto.

En cas de perte d'un laisser-passer, ou si un laisser-passer venait à être trouvé, le fait devrait être signalé immédiatement à l' "Assistant Provost Marshal" le plus proche.

Signature of Bearer Floyd Gibbons

Good only for the American zone

PHOTOGRAPH AND DESCRIPTION OF THE HOLDER OF THIS LICENCE
Photographie et signalement du titulaire

Name / Nom: Gibbons, Floyd
Nationality / Nationalité: American
Age / Age: 30
Height / Taille: 5 ft 11½ inches
Color of hair / Cheveux: brown
Color of eyes / Yeux: blue
General build and any distinctive marks / Apparence générale et signes particuliers:

Floyd Gibbons
SIGNATURE OF THE HOLDER / Signature du Titulaire

Berger-Levrault, Paris.

Valable uniquement pour la zone de l'Armée Américaine

Ellis Preston

Good only for the American zone

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
ARMÉE AMÉRICAINE

PRESS CORRESPONDENT'S LICENCE
Permis de journaliste

N° of the licence / N° du permis: 9

The bearer / Le Titulaire: Gibbons, Floyd
is authorized to accompany the / est autorisé à accompagner
American Expeditionary Forces in France as an accredited correspondent / l'Armée américaine en France comme journaliste
Representing / Représentant: Chicago Tribune
subject to the regulations / sous les conditions fixées par le règlement
for Press Correspondents. / relatif aux correspondants de presse
Date / Date: 1 November 1917

Headquarters of the American Expeditionary Forces. / Quartier Général de l'Armée américaine.

Frederick Palmer
Major S.C. U.S.R.
Press Officer

John J. Pershing
Commander-in-Chief

Valable uniquement pour la zone de l'Armée Américaine

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"AND THEY THOUGHT WE WOULDN'T FIGHT"

BY

FLOYD GIBBONS

OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENT OF *THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE*,
ACCREDITED TO THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

Copyright, 1918,
By George H. Doran Company

Printed in the United States of America

TO

GENERAL JOHN J. PERSHING

AND

THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

I RESPECTFULLY DEDICATE THIS INADEQUATE RECORD
IN REVERENT MEMORY OF
OUR SACRED DEAD
ON FIELDS IN FRANCE

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author expresses his hearty thanks to *The Chicago Tribune* for the opportunity he enjoyed as a correspondent of that paper, in the service of which he secured the material for these papers.

Personal.

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

France, August 17, 1918.

Mr. Floyd Gibbons,
Care Chicago Tribune,
420 Rue Saint-Honore,
Paris.

Dear Mr. Gibbons:

At this time, when you are returning to America, I wish to express to you my appreciation of the cordial cooperation and assistance you have always given us in your important work as correspondent of the Chicago Tribune in France. I also wish to congratulate you on the honor which the French government has done you in giving you the Croix de Guerre, which is but a just reward for the consistent devotion to your duty and personal bravery that you have exhibited.

My personal regrets that you are leaving us at this time are lessened by the knowledge of the great opportunity you will have of giving to our people in America a true picture of the work of the American soldier in France and of impressing on them the necessity of carrying on this work to the end, which can be accomplished only by victory for the Allied arms. You have a great opportunity, and I am confident that you will grasp it, as you have grasped your past opportunities, with success. You have always played the game squarely and with courage, and I wish to thank you.

Sincerely yours,

John J. Pershing.

G. Q. G. A, le July 28, 1918.

COMMANDEMENT EN CHEF
DES ARMÉES ALLIES

LE GÉNÉRAL

MONSIEUR,

I understand that you are going to the United States to give lectures on what you have seen on the French front.

No one is more qualified than you to do this, after your brilliant conduct in the Bois de Belleau.

The American Army has proved itself to be magnificent in spirit, in gallantry and in vigor; it has contributed largely to our successes. If you can thus be the echo of my opinion I am sure you will serve a good purpose.

Very sincerely yours,

(*Signed*) F. FOCH.

MONSIEUR FLOYD GIBBONS,
War Correspondent of the Chicago *Tribune*.

Commandement en Chef
des Armées Alliées

Le Général

G Q G A le 28 Juillet 1918.

Monsieur,

Je sais que vous allez donner des conférences aux Etats-Unis pour raconter ce que vous avez vu sur le front français.

Personne n'est plus qualifié que vous pour le faire, après votre brillante conduite au Bois BELLEAU.

L'Armée Américaine se montre magnifique de sentiments, de valeur et d'entrain, elle a contribué pour une large part à nos succès. Si vous pouvez être l'écho de mon opinion, je n'y verrai qu'avantage.

Croyez, Monsieur, à mes meilleurs sentiments.

Monsieur FLOYD GIBBONS
Correspondant de Guerre du CHICAGO TRIBUNE.

GRAND QUARTIER GÉNÉRAL
DES ARMÉES DU NORD ET DU NORD EST

ETAT-MAJOR

BUREAU DU PERSONNEL
(Decorations)

ORDER No. 8809 D

The General Commander-in-Chief Cites for the *Croix de Guerre*

M. FLOYD GIBBONS, War Correspondent of the Chicago *Tribune:*

"Has time after time given proof of his courage and bravery by going to the most exposed posts to gather information. On June 5, 1918, while accompanying a regiment of marines who were attacking a wood, he was severely wounded by three machine gun bullets in going to the rescue of an American officer wounded near him—demonstrating, by this action, the most noble devotion. When, a few hours later, he was lifted and transported to the dressing station, he begged not to be cared for until the wounded who had arrived before him had been attended to."

General Headquarters, August 2, 1918
THE GENERAL COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
(*Signed*) PETAIN

GRAND QUARTIER GENERAL
DES ARMEES DU NORD ET DU NORD-EST
-:-o-:-o-.-o- -o-:-o-.-o-:-o-.-
ETAT - MAJOR
---++++---
BUREAU DU PERSONNEL.
(Décorations)
----oooo0$00ooo----

ORDRE N° 8809 D

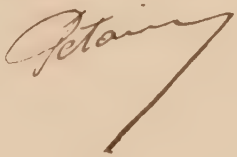
-:-o-:-o-:-o-:-o-

Le Général Commandant en Chef Cite à l'Ordre de l'Armée :

M. FLOYS GIBBONS, Correspondant de Guerre du Chicago Tribune:

"A donné à maintes reprises des preuves de courage et de bravoure, en allant recueillir des informations aux postes les plus exposés. Le 5 Juin 1918, accompagnant un régiment de Fusiliers marins qui attaquait un bois, a été très grièvement atteint de trois balles de mitrailleuses en se portant au secours d'un officier américain blessé à ses côtés, faisant ainsi preuve, en cette circonstance, du plus beau dévouement. Relevé plusieurs heures après et transporté au poste de secours, a demandé à ne pas être soigné avant les blessés arrivés avant lui."

Au Grand Quartier Général, le 2 Aout 1918.
LE GENERAL COMMANDANT EN CHEF.



FOREWORD

Marshal Foch, the commander of eleven million bayonets, has written that no man is more qualified than Gibbons to tell the true story of the Western Front. General Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces, has said that it was Gibbons' great opportunity to give the people in America a life-like picture of the work of the American soldier in France.

The key to the book is the man.

Back in the red days on the Rio Grande, word came from Pancho Villa that any "Gringos" found in Mexico would be killed on sight. The American people were interested in the Revolution at the border. Gibbons went into the Mexican hills alone and called Villa's bluff. He did more. He fitted out a box car, attached it to the revolutionary bandits' train and was in the thick of three of Villa's biggest battles. Gibbons brought out of Mexico the first authoritative information on the Mexican situation. The following year the War Department accredited him to General Pershing's punitive expedition and he rode with the flying column led by General Pershing when it crossed the border.

In 1917, the then Imperial German Government announced to the world that on and after February 1st its submarines would sink without warning any ship that ventured to enter a zone it had drawn in the waters of the North Atlantic.

Gibbons sensed the meaning of this impudent chal-

lenge. He saw ahead the overt act that was bound to come and be the cause of the United States entering the war. In these days the cry of "Preparedness" was echoing in the land. England had paid dearly for her lack of preparedness. The inefficient volunteer system had cost her priceless blood. The *Chicago Tribune* sought the most available newspaper man to send to London and write the story of England's costly mistakes for the profit of the American people. Gibbons was picked for the mission and arrangement was made for him to travel on the steamer by which the discredited Von Bernstorff was to return to Germany. The ship's safe conduct was guaranteed. Gibbons did not like this feature of the trip. He wanted to ride the seas in a ship without guarantees. His mind was on the overt act. He wanted to be on the job when it happened. He cancelled the passage provided for him on the Von Bernstorff ship and took passage on the largest liner in port, a ship large enough to be readily seen through a submarine periscope and important enough to attract the special attention of the German Admiralty. He sailed on the *Laconia,* an eighteen thousand ton Cunarder.

On the night of February 27, 1917, when the *Laconia* was two hundred miles off the coast of Ireland, the Gibbons' "hunch" was fulfilled. The *Laconia* was torpedoed and sunk. After a perilous night in a small boat on the open sea, Gibbons was rescued and brought into Queenstown. He opened the cables and flashed to America the most powerful call to arms to the American people. It shook the country. It was the testimony of an eye witness and it convinced the Imperial German Government, beyond all reasonable doubt, of the wilful and malicious murder of American citizens. The Gibbons story furnished the proof of the overt act and it was

unofficially admitted at Washington that it was the determining factor in sending America into the war one month later.

Gibbons greeted Pershing on the latter's landing in Liverpool. He accompanied the commander of the American Expeditionary Forces across the Channel and was at his side when he put foot on French soil. He was one of the two American correspondents to march with the first American troops that entered the trenches on the Western front. He was with the first American troops to cross the German frontier. He was with the artillery battalion that fired the first American shell into Germany.

On June 6th, 1918, Gibbons went "over the top" with the first waves in the great battle of the Bois de Belleau. Gibbons was with Major John Berry, who, while leading the charge, fell wounded. Gibbons saw him fall. Through the hail of lead from a thousand spitting machine guns, he rushed to the assistance of the wounded Major. A German machine gun bullet shot away part of his left shoulder, but this did not stop Gibbons. Another bullet smashed through his arm, but still Gibbons kept on. A third bullet got him. It tore out his left eye and made a compound fracture of the skull. For three hours he lay conscious on the open field in the Bois de Belleau with a murderous machine gun fire playing a few inches over his head until under cover of darkness he was able to crawl off the field. For his gallant conduct he received a citation from General Petain, Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies, and the French Government awarded him the Croix de Guerre with the Palm.

On July 5th, he was out of the hospital and back at the front, covering the first advance of the Americans with the British forces before Amiens. On July 18th he

was the only correspondent with the American troops when they executed the history-making drive against the German armies in the Château-Thierry salient—the beginning of the German end. He rode with the first detachment of American troops that entered Château-Thierry upon the heels of the retreating Germans.

Floyd Gibbons was the first to sound the alarm of the danger of the German peace offensive. Six weeks before the drive for a negotiated peace was made by the German Government against the home flank in America, Gibbons told that it was on the way. He crossed the Atlantic with his crippled arm in a sling and his head bandaged, to spend his convalescence warning American audiences against what he called the "Crooked Kamerad Cry."

Gibbons has lived the war, he has been a part of it. "And They Thought We Wouldn't Fight" is the voice of our men in France.

FRANK COMERFORD.

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"AND THEY THOUGHT WE WOULDN'T FIGHT"

CHAPTER I

THE SINKING OF THE *Laconia*

Between America and the firing line, there are three thousand miles of submarine infested water. Every American soldier, before encountering the dangers of the battle-front, must first overcome the dangers of the deep.

Geographically, America is almost four thousand miles from the war zone, but in fact every American soldier bound for France entered the war zone one hour out of New York harbour. Germany made an Ally out of the dark depths of the Atlantic.

That three-thousand-mile passage represented greater possibilities for the destruction of the United States overseas forces than any strategical operation that Germany's able military leaders could direct in the field.

Germany made use of that three thousand miles of water, just as she developed the use of barbed wire entanglements along the front. Infantry advancing across No Man's Land were held helpless before the enemy's fire by barbed wire entanglements. Germany, with her submarine policy of ruthlessness, changed the Atlantic Ocean into another No Man's Land across which every American soldier had to pass at the mercy of the enemy before he could arrive at the actual battle-front.

This was the peril of the troop ship. This was the tremendous advantage which the enemy held over our armies even before they reached the field. This was the unprecedented condition which the United States and

Allied navies had to cope with in the great undertaking of transporting our forces overseas.

Any one who has crossed the ocean, even in the normal times before shark-like Kultur skulked beneath the water, has experienced the feeling of human helplessness that comes in mid-ocean when one considers the comparative frailty of such man-made devices as even the most modern turbine liners, with the enormous power of the wilderness of water over which one sails.

In such times one realises that safety rests, first upon the kindliness of the elements; secondly, upon the skill and watchfulness of those directing the voyage, and thirdly, upon the dependability of such human-made things as engines, propellers, steel plates, bolts and rivets.

But add to the possibilities of a failure or a misalliance of any or all of the above functions, the greater danger of a diabolical human, yet inhuman, interference, directed against the seafarer with the purpose and intention of his destruction. This last represents the greatest odds against those who go to sea during the years of the great war.

A sinking at sea is a nightmare. I have been through one. I have been on a ship torpedoed in mid-ocean. I have stood on the slanting decks of a doomed liner; I have listened to the lowering of the life-boats, heard the hiss of escaping steam and the roar of ascending rockets as they tore lurid rents in the black sky and cast their red glare o'er the roaring sea.

I have spent a night in an open boat on the tossing swells. I have been through, in reality, the mad dream of drifting and darkness and bailing and pulling on the oars and straining aching eyes toward an empty, meaningless horizon in search of help. I shall try to tell you how it feels.

I had been assigned by *The Chicago Tribune* to go to London as their correspondent. Almost the same day I received that assignment, the "Imperial" Government of Germany had invoked its ruthless submarine policy, had drawn a blockade zone about the waters of the British Isles and the coasts of France, and had announced to the world that its U-boats would sink without warning any ship, of any kind, under any flag, that tried to sail the waters that Germany declared prohibitory.

In consideration of my personal safety and, possibly, of my future usefulness, the *Tribune* was desirous of arranging for me a safe passage across the Atlantic. Such an opportunity presented itself in the ordered return of the disgraced and discredited German Ambassador to the United States, Count von Bernstorff.

Under the rules of International courtesy, a ship had been provided for the use of von Bernstorff and his diplomatic staff. That ship was to sail under absolute guarantees of safe conduct from all of the nations at war with Germany and, of course, it would also have been safe from attack by German submarines. That ship was the *Frederick VIII*. At considerable expense the *Tribune* managed to obtain for me a cabin passage on that ship.

I can't say that I was over-impressed with the prospect of travel in such company. I disliked the thought that I, an American citizen, with rights as such to sail the sea, should have to resort to subterfuge and scheming to enjoy those rights. There arose in me a feeling of challenge against Germany's order which forbade American ships to sail the ocean. I cancelled my sailing on the *Frederick VIII*.

In New York, I sought passage on the first American ship sailing for England. I made the rounds of the steamship offices and learned that the Cunard liner *La-*

conia was the first available boat and was about to sail. She carried a large cargo of munitions and other materials of war. I booked passage aboard her. It was on Saturday, February 17th, 1917, that we steamed away from the dock at New York and moved slowly down the East River. We were bound for Liverpool, England. My cabin accommodations were good. The *Laconia* was listed at 18,000 tons and was one of the largest Cunarders in the Atlantic service. The next morning we were out of sight of land.

Sailors were stationed along the decks of the ship and in the look-outs at the mast heads. They maintained a watch over the surface of the sea in all directions. On the stern of the ship, there was mounted a six-inch cannon and a crew of gunners stood by it night and day.

Submarines had been recently reported in the waters through which we were sailing, but we saw none of them and apparently they saw none of us. They had sunk many ships, but all of the sinkings had been in the day time. Consequently, there was a feeling of greater safety at night. The *Laconia* sailed on a constantly zigzagging course. All of our life-boats were swinging out over the side of the ship, so that if we were hit they could be lowered in a hurry. Every other day the passengers and the crew would be called up on the decks to stand by the life-boats that had been assigned to them.

The officers of the ship instructed us in the life-boat drill. They showed us how to strap the life-preservers about our bodies; they showed us how to seat ourselves in the life-boats; they showed us a small keg of water and some tin cans of biscuits, a lantern and some flares that were stored in the boat, and so we sailed along day after day without meeting any danger. At night, all of

the lights were put out and the ship slipped along through the darkness.

On Sunday, after we had been sailing for eight days, we entered the zone that had been prohibited by the Kaiser. We sailed into it full steam ahead and nothing happened. That day was February the twenty-fifth. In the afternoon, I was seated in the lounge with two friends. One was an American whose name was Kirby; the other was a Canadian and his name was Dugan. The latter was an aviator in the British army. In fights with German aeroplanes high over the Western Front he had been wounded and brought down twice and the army had sent him to his home in Canada to get well. He was returning once more to the battle front "to stop another bullet," as he said.

As we talked, I passed around my cigarette case and Dugan held a lighted match while the three of us lighted our cigarettes from it. As Dugan blew out the match and placed the burnt end in an ash tray, he laughed and said,

"They say it is bad luck to light three cigarettes with the same match, but I think it is good luck for me. I used to do it frequently with my flying partners in France and four of them have been killed, but I am still alive."

"That makes it all right for you," said Kirby, "but it makes it look bad for Gibbons and myself. But nothing is going to happen. I don't believe in superstitions."

That night after dinner Dugan and I took a brisk walk around the darkened promenade deck of the *Laconia*. The night was very dark, a stiff wind was blowing and the *Laconia* was rolling slightly in the trough of the waves. Wet from spray, we returned within and in one of the corridors met the Captain of the ship. I told him

that I would like very much to have a look at his chart and learn our exact location on the ocean.

He looked at me and laughed because that was a very secret matter. But he replied:

"Oh, you would, would you?" and his voice carried that particular British intonation that seemed to say, "Well it is jolly well none of your business."

Then I asked him when he thought we would land in Liverpool.

"I really don't know," said the ship's commander, and then, with a wink, he added, "but my steward told me that we would get in Tuesday evening."

Kirby and I went to the smoke room on the boat deck well to the stern of the ship. We joined a circle of Britishers who were seated in front of a coal fire in an open hearth. Nearly every one in the lighted smoke room was playing cards, so that the conversation was practically confined to the mentioning of bids and the orders of drinks from the stewards.

"What do you think are our chances of being torpedoed?" was the question I put before the circle in front of the fireplace.

The deliberative Mr. Henry Chetham, a London solicitor, was the first to answer.

"Well," he drawled, "I should say about four thousand to one."

Lucien J. Jerome of the British Diplomatic Service, returning with an Ecuadorian valet from South America, advanced his opinion.

I was much impressed with his opinion because the speaker himself had impressed me deeply. He was the best monocle juggler I had ever met. In his right eye he carried a monocle without a rim and without a ribbon

or thread to save it, should it ever have fallen from his eye.

Repeatedly during the trip, I had seen Mr. Jerome standing on the hurrideck of the *Laconia* facing the wind but holding the glass disk in his eye with a muscular grip that must have been vise-like. I had even followed him around the deck several times in a desire to be present when the monocle blew out, but the British diplomatist never for once lost his grip on it. I had come to the opinion that the piece of glass was fixed to his eye and that he slept with it. After the fashion of the British Diplomatic Service, he expressed his opinion most affirmatively.

"Nonsense," he said with reference to Mr. Chetham's estimate. "Utter nonsense. Considering the zone that we are in and the class of the ship, I should put the chances down at two hundred and fifty to one that we don't meet a 'sub.'"

At that minute the torpedo hit us.

Have you ever stood on the deck of a ferry boat as it arrived in the slip? And have you ever experienced the slight sideward shove when the boat rubs against the piling and comes to a stop? That was the unmistakable lurch we felt, but no one expects to run into pilings in mid-ocean, so every one knew what it was.

At the same time, there came a muffled noise—not extremely loud nor yet very sharp—just a noise like the slamming of some large oaken door a good distance away. Realising that we had been torpedoed, my imagination was rather disappointed at the slightness of the shock and the meekness of the report. One or two chairs tipped over, a few glasses crashed from table to floor and in an instant every man in the room was on his feet.

"We're hit," shouted Mr. Chetham.

"That's what we've been waiting for," said Mr. Jerome.

"What a lousy torpedo!" said Mr. Kirby. "It must have been a fizzer."

I looked at my watch; it was 10:30.

Five sharp blasts sounded on the *Laconia's* whistle. Since that night, I have often marvelled at the quick co-ordination of mind and hand that belonged to the man on the bridge who pulled that whistle rope. Those five blasts constituted the signal to abandon the ship. Every one recognised them.

We walked hurriedly down the corridor leading from the smoke room in the stern to the lounge which was amidships. We moved fast but there was no crowding and no panic. Passing the open door of the gymnasium, I became aware of the list of the vessel. The floor of the gymnasium slanted down on the starboard side and a medicine ball and dozens of dumb bells and Indian clubs were rolling in that direction.

We entered the lounge—a large drawing room furnished with green upholstered chairs and divans and small tables on which the after-dinner liqueur glasses still rested. In one corner was a grand piano with the top elevated. In the centre of the slanting floor of the saloon was a cabinet victrola and from its mahogany bowels there poured the last and dying strains of "Poor Butterfly."

The women and several men who had been in the lounge were hurriedly leaving by the forward door as we entered. We followed them through. The twin winding stairs leading below decks by the forward hatch were dark and I brought into play a pocket flashlight shaped like a fountain pen. I had purchased it before

sailing in view of such an emergency and I had always carried it fastened with a clip in an upper vest pocket.

My stateroom was B 19 on the promenade deck, one deck below the deck on which was located the smoke room, the lounge and the life-boats. The corridor was dimly lighted and the floor had a more perceptible slant as I darted into my stateroom, which was on the starboard and sinking side of the ship. I hurriedly put on a light non-sink garment constructed like a vest, which I had come provided with, and then donned an overcoat.

Responding to the list of the ship, the wardrobe door swung open and crashed against the wall. My typewriter slid off the dressing table and a shower of toilet articles pitched from their places on the washstand. I grabbed the ship's life-preserver in my left hand and, with the flashlight in my right hand, started up the hatchway to the upper deck.

In the darkness of the boat deck hatchway, the rays of my flashlight revealed the chief steward opening the door of a switch closet in the panel wall. He pushed on a number of switches and instantly the decks of the *Laconia* became bright. From sudden darkness, the exterior of the ship burst into a blaze of light and it was that illumination that saved many lives.

The *Laconia's* engines and dynamos had not yet been damaged. The torpedo had hit us well astern on the starboard side and the bulkheads seemed to be holding back from the engine room the flood of water that rushed in through the gaping hole in the ship's side. I proceeded down the boat deck to my station opposite boat No. 10. I looked over the side and down upon the water sixty feet below.

The sudden flashing of the lights on the upper deck

made the dark seething waters seem blacker and angrier. They rose and fell in troubled swells.

Steam began to hiss from some of the pipes leading up from the engine well. It seemed like a dying groan from the very vitals of the stricken ship. Clouds of white and black smoke rolled up from the giant grey funnels that towered above us.

Suddenly there was a roaring swish as a rocket soared upward from the Captain's bridge, leaving a comet's tail of fire. I watched it as it described a graceful arc and then with an audible pop it burst in a flare of brilliant colour. Its ascent had torn a lurid rent in the black sky and had cast a red glare over the roaring sea.

Already boat No. 10 was loading up and men and boys were busy with the ropes. I started to help near a davit that seemed to be giving trouble but was sternly ordered to get out of the way and to get into the boat.

Other passengers and members of the crew and officers of the ship were rushing to and fro along the deck strapping their life-preservers to them as they rushed. There was some shouting of orders but little or no confusion. One woman, a blonde French actress, became hysterical on the deck, but two men lifted her bodily off her feet and placed her in the life-boat.

We were on the port side of the ship, the higher side. To reach the boats, we had to climb up the slanting deck to the edge of the ship.

On the starboard side, it was different. On that side, the decks slanted down toward the water. The ship careened in that direction and the life-boats suspended from the davits swung clear of the ship's side.

The list of the ship increased. On the port side, we looked down the slanting side of the ship and noticed

that her water line on that side was a number of feet above the waves. The slant was so pronounced that the life-boats, instead of swinging clear from the davits, rested against the side of the ship. From my position in the life-boat I could see that we were going to have difficulty in the descent to the water.

"Lower away," some one gave the order and we started downward with a jerk toward the seemingly hungry, rising and falling swells. Then we stopped with another jerk and remained suspended in mid-air while the men at the bow and the stern swore and tusseled with the ropes.

The stern of the boat was down; the bow up, leaving us at an angle of about forty-five degrees. We clung to the seats to save ourselves from falling out.

"Who's got a knife? A knife! A knife!" shouted a fireman in the bow. He was bare to the waist and perspiration stood out in drops on his face and chest and made streaks through the coal dust with which his skin was grimed.

"Great Gawd! Give him a knife," bawled a half-dressed jibbering negro stoker who wrung his hands in the stern.

A hatchet was thrust into my hands and I forwarded it to the bow. There was a flash of sparks as it was brought down with a clang on the holding pulley. One strand of the rope parted.

Down plunged the bow of the boat too quickly for the men in the stern. We came to a jerky stop, this time with the stern in the air and the bow down, the dangerous angle reversed.

One man in the stern let the rope race through his blistered fingers. With hands burnt to the quick, he grabbed

the rope and stopped the precipitous descent just in time to bring the stern level with the bow.

Then bow and stern tried to lower away together. The slant of the ship's side had increased, so that our boat instead of sliding down it like a toboggan was held up on one side when the taffrail caught on one of the condenser exhaust pipes projecting slightly from the ship's side.

Thus the starboard side of the life-boat stuck fast and high while the port side dropped down and once more we found ourselves clinging on at a new angle and looking straight down into the water.

A hand slipped into mine and a voice sounded huskily close to my ear. It was the little old Jewish travelling man who was disliked in the smoke room because he used to speak too certainly of things about which he was uncertain. His slightly Teutonic dialect had made him as popular as the smallpox with the British passengers.

"My poy, I can't see nutting," he said. "My glasses slipped and I am falling. Hold me, please."

I managed to reach out and join hands with another man on the other side of the old man and together we held him in. He hung heavily over our arms, grotesquely grasping all he had saved from his stateroom—a gold-headed cane and an extra hat.

Many feet and hands pushed the boat from the side of the ship and we renewed our sagging, scraping, sliding, jerking descent. It ended as the bottom of the life-boat smacked squarely on the pillowy top of a rising swell. It felt more solid than mid-air at least.

But we were far from being off. The pulleys twice stuck in their fastings, bow and stern, and the one axe was passed forward and back (and with it my flash-

light) as the entangling mesh of ropes that held us to the sinking *Laconia* was cut away.

Some shout from that confusion of sound caused me to look up. I believe I really did so in the fear that one of the nearby boats was being lowered upon us.

Tin funnels enamelled white and containing clusters of electric bulbs hung over the side from one of the upper decks. I looked up into the cone of one of these lights and a bulky object shot suddenly out of the darkness into the scope of the electric rays.

It was a man. His arms were bent up at the elbows; his legs at the knees. He was jumping, with the intention, I feared, of landing in our boat, and I prepared to avoid the impact. But he had judged his distance well.

He plunged beyond us and into the water three feet from the edge of the boat. He sank from sight, leaving a white patch of bubbles and foam on the black water. He bobbed to the surface almost immediately.

"It's Dugan," shouted a man next to me.

I flashed a light on the ruddy, smiling face and water plastered hair of the little Canadian aviator, our fellow saloon passenger. We pulled him over the side and into the boat. He spluttered out a mouthful of water.

"I wonder if there is anything to that lighting three matches off the same match," he said. "I was trying to loosen the bow rope in this boat. I loosened it and then got tangled up in it. When the boat descended, I was jerked up back on the deck. Then I jumped for it. Holy Moses, but this water is cold."

As we pulled away from the side of the ship, its receding terraces of glowing port holes and deck lights towered above us. The ship was slowly turning over.

We were directly opposite the engine room section of the *Laconia*. There was a tangle of oars, spars and rig-

ging on the seats in our boat, and considerable confusion resulted before we could manage to place in operation some of the big oars on either side.

The jibbering, bullet-headed negro was pulling a sweep directly behind me and I turned to quiet him as his frantic reaches with the oar were jabbing me in the back.

In the dull light from the upper decks, I looked into his slanting face—his eyes all whites and his lips moving convulsively. He shivered with fright, but in addition to that he was freezing in the thin cotton shirt that composed his entire upper covering. He worked feverishly at the oar to warm himself.

"Get away from her. My Gawd, get away from her," he kept repeating. "When the water hits her hot boilers she'll blow up the whole ocean and there's just tons and tons of shrapnel in her hold."

His excitement spread to other members of the crew in our boat. The ship's baker, designated by his pantry headgear of white linen, became a competing alarmist and a white fireman, whose blasphemy was nothing short of profound, added to the confusion by cursing every one.

It was the tension of the minute—it was the give way of overwrought nerves—it was bedlam and nightmare.

I sought to establish some authority in our boat which was about to break out into full mutiny. I made my way to the stern. There, huddled up in a great overcoat and almost muffled in a ship's life-preserver, I came upon an old white-haired man and I remembered him.

He was a sea-captain of the old sailing days. He had been a second cabin passenger with whom I had talked before. Earlier in the year he had sailed out of Nova Scotia with a cargo of codfish. His schooner, the *Secret,* had broken in two in mid-ocean, but he and his

crew had been picked up by a tramp and taken back to New York.

From there he had sailed on another ship bound for Europe, but this ship, a Holland-American Liner, the *Ryndam,* had never reached the other side. In mid-Atlantic her captain had lost courage over the U-boat threats. He had turned the ship about and returned to America. Thus, the *Laconia* represented the third unsuccessful attempt of this grey-haired mariner to get back to his home in England. His name was Captain Dear.

"Our boat's rudder is gone, but we can stear with an oar," he said, in a weak-quavering voice—the thin high-pitched treble of age. "I will take charge, if you want me to, but my voice is gone. I can tell you what to do, but you will have to shout the orders. They won't listen to me."

There was only one way to get the attention of the crew, and that was by an overpowering blast of profanity. I called to my assistance every ear-splitting, soul-sizzling oath that I could think of.

I recited the lurid litany of the army mule skinner to his gentle charges and embellished it with excerpts from the remarks of a Chicago taxi chauffeur while he changed tires on the road with the temperature ten below.

It proved to be an effective combination, this brimstoned oration of mine, because it was rewarded by silence.

"Is there a ship's officer in this boat?" I shouted. There was no answer.

"Is there a sailor or a seaman on board?" I inquired, and again there was silence from our group of passengers, firemen, stokers and deck swabs.

They appeared to be listening to me and I wished to keep my hold on them. I racked my mind for some other query to make or some order to direct. Before the spell was broken I found one.

"We will now find out how many of us there are in this boat," I announced in the best tones of authority that I could assume. "The first man in the bow will count one and the next man to him will count two. We will count from the bow back to the stern, each man taking a number. Begin."

"One," came the quick response from a passenger who happened to be the first man in the bow. The enumeration continued sharply toward the stern. I spoke the last number.

"There are twenty-three of us here," I repeated, "there's not a ship's officer or seaman among us, but we are extremely fortunate to have with us an old sea-captain who has consented to take charge of the boat and save our lives. His voice is weak, but I will repeat the orders for him, so that all of you can hear. Are you ready to obey his orders?"

There was an almost unanimous acknowledgment of assent and order was restored.

"The first thing to be done," I announced upon Captain Dear's instructions, "is to get the same number of oars pulling on each side of the boat; to seat ourselves so as to keep on an even keel and then to keep the boat's head up into the wind so that we won't be swamped by the waves."

With some little difficulty, this rearrangement was accomplished and then we rested on our oars with all eyes turned on the still lighted *Laconia*. The torpedo had hit at about 10:30 P. M. according to our ship's time.

Though listing far over on one side, the *Laconia* was still afloat.

It must have been twenty minutes after that first shot that we heard another dull thud, which was accompanied by a noticeable drop in the hulk. The German submarine had despatched a second torpedo through the engine room and the boat's vitals from a distance of two hundred yards.

We watched silently during the next minute as the tiers of lights dimmed slowly from white to yellow, then to red and then nothing was left but the murky mourning of the night which hung over all like a pall.

A mean, cheese-coloured crescent of a moon revealed one horn above a rag bundle of clouds low in the distance. A rim of blackness settled around our little world, relieved only by a few leering stars in the zenith, and, where the *Laconia's* lights had shown, there remained only the dim outlines of a blacker hulk standing out above the water like a jagged headland, silhouetted against the overcast sky.

The ship sank rapidly at the stern until at last its nose rose out of the water, and stood straight up in the air. Then it slid silently down and out of sight like a piece of scenery in a panorama spectacle.

Boat No. 3 stood closest to the place where the ship had gone down. As a result of the after suction, the small life-boat rocked about in a perilous sea of clashing spars and wreckage.

As the boat's crew steadied its head into the wind, a black hulk, glistening wet and standing about eight feet above the surface of the water, approached slowly. It came to a stop opposite the boat and not ten feet from the side of it. It was the submarine.

"Vot ship vass dot?" were the first words of throaty

guttural English that came from a figure which projected from the conning tower.

"The *Laconia,*" answered the Chief Steward Ballyn, who commanded the life-boat.

"Vot?"

"The *Laconia,* Cunard Line," responded the steward.

"Vot did she weigh?" was the next question from the submarine.

"Eighteen thousand tons."

"Any passengers?"

"Seventy-three," replied Ballyn, "many of them women and children—some of them in this boat. She had over two hundred in the crew."

"Did she carry cargo?"

"Yes."

"Iss der Captain in dot boat?'"

"No," Ballyn answered.

"Well, I guess you'll be all right. A patrol will pick you up some time soon." Without further sound save for the almost silent fixing of the conning tower lid, the submarine moved off.

"I thought it best to make my answers sharp and satisfactory, sir," said Ballyn, when he repeated the conversation to me word for word. "I was thinking of the women and children in the boat. I feared every minute that somebody in our boat might make a hostile move, fire a revolver, or throw something at the submarine. I feared the consequence of such an act."

There was no assurance of an early pickup so we made preparations for a siege with the elements. The weather was a great factor. That black rim of clouds looked ominous. There was a good promise of rain. February has a reputation for nasty weather in the north Atlantic. The wind was cold and seemed to be rising. Our boat

bobbed about like a cork on the swells, which fortunately were not choppy.

How much rougher seas could the boat weather? This question and conditions were debated pro and con.

Had our rockets been seen? Did the first torpedo put the wireless out of commission? If it had been able to operate, had anybody heard our S. O. S.? Was there enough food and drinking water in the boat to last?

This brought us to an inventory of our small craft. After considerable difficulty, we found the lamp, a can of powder flares, the tin of ship's biscuit, matches and spare oil.

The lamp was lighted. Other lights were now visible. As we drifted in the darkness, we could see them every time we mounted the crest of the swells. The boats carrying these lights remained quite close together at first.

One boat came within sound and I recognised the Harry Lauder-like voice of the second assistant purser whom I had last heard on Wednesday at the ship's concert. Now he was singing—"I Want to Marry 'arry," and "I Love to be a Sailor."

There were an American woman and her husband in that boat. She told me later that an attempt had been made to sing "Tipperary," and "Rule Britannia," but the thought of that slinking dark hull of destruction that might have been a part of the immediate darkness resulted in the abandonment of the effort.

"Who's the officer in that boat?" came a cheery hail from the nearby light.

"What the hell is it to you?" our half frozen negro yelled out for no reason apparent to me other than possibly the relief of his feelings.

"Will somebody brain that skunk with a pin?" was

the inquiry of our profound oathsman, who also expressed regret that he happened to be sitting too far away from the negro to reach him. He accompanied the announcement with a warmth of language that must have relieved the negro of his chill.

The fear of the boats crashing together produced a general inclination toward maximum separation on the part of all the little units of survivors, with the result that soon the small crafts stretched out for several miles, their occupants all endeavoring to hold the heads of the boats into the wind.

Hours passed. The swells slopped over the sides of our boat and filled the bottom with water. We bailed it continually. Most of us were wet to the knees and shivering from the weakening effects of the icy water. Our hands were blistered from pulling at the oars. Our boat, bobbing about like a cork, produced terrific nausea, and our stomachs ached from vain wrenching.

And then we saw the first light—the first sign of help coming—the first searching glow of white radiance deep down the sombre sides of the black pot of night that hung over us. I don't know what direction it came from—none of us knew north from south—there was nothing but water and sky. But the light—it just came from over there where we pointed. We nudged dumb, sick boat mates and directed their gaze and aroused them to an appreciation of the sight that gave us new life.

It was 'way over there—first a trembling quiver of silver against the blackness, then drawing closer, it defined itself as a beckoning finger, although still too far away to see our feeble efforts to attract it.

Nevertheless, we wasted valuable flares and the ship's baker, self-ordained custodian of the biscuit, did the

honours handsomely to the extent of a biscuit apiece to each of the twenty-three occupants of the boat.

"Pull starboard, sonnies," sang out old Captain Dear, his grey chin whiskers bristling with joy in the light of the round lantern which he held aloft.

We pulled—pulled lustily, forgetting the strain and pain of innards torn and racked with violent vomiting, and oblivious of blistered palms and wet, half-frozen feet.

Then a nodding of that finger of light,—a happy, snapping, crap-shooting finger that seemed to say: "Come on, you men," like a dice player wooing the bones—led us to believe that our lights had been seen.

This was the fact, for immediately the oncoming vessel flashed on its green and red sidelights and we saw it was headed for our position. We floated off its stern for a while as it manœuvred for the best position in which it could take us on with a sea that was running higher and higher.

The risk of that rescuing ship was great, because there was every reason to believe that the submarine that had destroyed the *Laconia* still lurked in the darkness nearby, but those on board took the risk and stood by for the work of rescue.

"Come along side port!" was megaphoned to us. As fast as we could, we swung under the stern and felt our way broadside toward the ship's side.

Out of the darkness above, a dozen small pocket flashlights blinked down on us and orders began to be shouted fast and thick.

When I look back on the night, I don't know which was the more hazardous, going down the slanting side of the sinking *Laconia* or going up the side of the rescuing vessel.

One minute the swells would lift us almost level with

the rail of the low-built patrol boat and mine sweeper, but the next receding wave would swirl us down into a darksome gulf over which the ship's side glowered like a slimy, dripping cliff.

A score of hands reached out and we were suspended in the husky, tatooed arms of those doughty British Jack Tars, looking up into their weather-beaten youthful faces, mumbling our thankfulness and reading in the gold lettering on their pancake hats the legend, "H. M. S. *Laburnum.*" We had been six hours in the open boat.

The others began coming alongside one by one. Wet and bedraggled survivors were lifted aboard. Women and children first was the rule.

The scenes of reunion were heart-gripping. Men who had remained strangers to one another aboard the *Laconia,* now wrung each other by the hand or embraced without shame the frail little wife of a Canadian chaplain who had found one of her missing children delivered up from another boat. She smothered the child with ravenous mother kisses while tears of gladness streamed down her face.

Boat after boat came alongside. The water-logged craft containing the Captain came last.

A rousing cheer went up as he stepped on the deck, one mangled hand hanging limp at his side.

The sailors divested themselves of outer clothing and passed the garments over to the shivering members of the *Laconia's* crew.

The cramped officers' quarters down under the quarter deck were turned over to the women and children. Two of the *Laconia's* stewardesses passed boiling basins of navy cocoa and aided in the disentangling of wet and matted tresses.

The men grouped themselves near steam-pipes in the

petty officers' quarters or over the grating of the engine rooms, where new life was to be had from the upward blasts of heated air that brought with them the smell of bilge water and oil and sulphur from the bowels of the vessel.

The injured—all minor cases, sprained backs, wrenched legs or mashed hands—were put away in bunks under the care of the ship's doctor.

Dawn was melting the eastern ocean grey to pink when the task was finished. In the officers' quarters, which had now been invaded by the men, the roll of the vessel was most perceptible. Each time the floor of the room slanted, bottles and cups and plates rolled and slid back and forth.

On the tables and chairs and benches the women rested. Sea-sick mothers, trembling from the after-effects of the terrifying experience of the night, sought to soothe their crying children.

Then somebody happened to touch a key on the small wooden organ that stood against one wall. This was enough to send some callous seafaring fingers over the ivory keys in a rhythm unquestionably religious and so irresistible under the circumstances that, although no one seemed to know the words, the air was taken up in a reverent, humming chant by all in the room.

At the last note of the Amen, little Father Warring, his black garb snaggled in places and badly soiled, stood before the centre table and lifted back his head until the morning light, filtering through the opened hatch above him, shown down on his kindly, weary face. He recited the Lord's prayer and all present joined. The simple, impressive service of thanksgiving ended as simply as it had begun.

Two minutes later I saw the old Jewish travelling man

limping about on one lame leg with a little boy in his arms. He was collecting big, round British pennies for the youngster.

A survey and cruise of the nearby waters revealed no more occupied boats and our mine sweeper, with its load of survivors numbering two hundred and sixty-seven, steamed away to the east. A half an hour steaming and the vessel stopped within hailing distance of two sister ships, toward one of which an open boat manned by jackies was being pulled.

I saw the hysterical French actress, her blonde hair wet and bedraggled, lifted out of the boat and carried up the companionway. Then a little boy, his fresh pink face and golden hair shining in the morning sun, was passed upward, followed by some other survivors, numbering fourteen in all, who had been found half-drowned and almost dead from exposure in a partially wrecked boat that was picked up just as it was sinking. It was in that boat that one American woman and her daughter died. One of the survivors of the boat told me the story. He said:

"Our boat was No. 8. It was smashed in the lowering. I was in the bow. Mrs. Hoy and her daughter were sitting toward the stern. The boat filled with water rapidly.

"It was no use trying to bail it out. There was a big hole in the side and it came in too fast. The boat's edge sank to the level of the water and only the air-tanks kept it afloat.

"It was completely awash. Every swell rode clear over our heads and we had to hold our breath until we came to the surface again. The cold water just takes the life out of you.

"We saw the other boats showing their lights and drifting further and further away from us. We had no lights. And then, towards morning, we saw the rescuing ship come up into the cluster of other life-boats that had drifted so far away from us. One by one we saw their lights disappear as they were taken on board.

"We shouted and screamed and shrieked at the tops of our voices, but could not attract the attention of any of the other boats or the rescuing ship, and soon we saw its lights blink out. We were left there in the darkness with the wind howling and the sea rolling higher every minute.

"The women got weaker and weaker. Maybe they had been dead for some time. I don't know, but a wave came and washed both Mrs. Hoy and her daughter out of the boat. There were life-belts around their bodies and they drifted away with their arms locked about one another."

With such stories ringing in our ears, with exchanges of experiences pathetic and humorous, we steamed into Queenstown harbour shortly after ten o'clock that night. We had been attacked at a point two hundred miles off the Irish coast and of our passengers and crew, thirteen had been lost.

As I stepped ashore, a Britisher, a fellow-passenger aboard the *Laconia*, who knew me as an American, stepped up to me. During the voyage we had had many conversations concerning the possibility of America entering the war. Now he slapped me on the back with this question,

"Well, old Casus Belli," he said, "is this your blooming overt act?"

I did not answer him, but thirty minutes afterward I was pounding out on a typewriter the introduction to a

four thousand word newspaper article which I cabled that night and which put the question up to the American public for an answer.

Five weeks later the United States entered the war.

CHAPTER II

PERSHING'S ARRIVAL IN EUROPE

LEAN, clean, keen—that's the way they looked—that first trim little band of American fighting men who made their historic landing on the shores of England, June 8th, 1917.

I went down from London to meet them at the port of arrival. In my despatches of that date, I, nor none of the other correspondents, was permitted to mention the name of the port. This was supposed to be the secret that was to be religiously kept and the British censor was on the job religiously.

The name of the port was excluded from all American despatches but the British censor saw no reason to withhold transmission of the following sentence—"Pershing landed to-day at an English port and was given a hearty welcome by the Mayor of Liverpool."

So I am presuming at this late date of writing that it would serve no further purpose to refrain from announcing flatly that General John J. Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces overseas, and his staff, landed on the date above mentioned, at Liverpool, England.

The sun was shining brightly on the Mersey when the giant ocean liner, the *Baltic*, came slowly up the harbour in the tow of numerous puffing tugs. The great grey vessel that had safely completed the crossing of the submarine zone, was warped to the dock-side.

On the quay there were a full brass band and an honourary escort of British soldiers. While the moorings

were being fastened, General Pershing, with his staff, appeared on the promenade deck on the shore side of the vessel.

His appearance was the signal for a crash of cymbals and drums as the band blared out the "Star Spangled Banner." The American commander and the officers ranged in line on either side of him, stood stiffly at attention, with right hands raised in salute to the visors of their caps.

On the shore the lines of British soldiery brought their arms to the present with a snap. Civilian witnesses of the ceremony bared their heads. The first anthem was followed by the playing of "God Save the King." All present remained at the salute.

As the gangplank was lashed in place, a delegation of British military and civilian officials boarded the ship and were presented to the General. Below, on the dock, every newspaper correspondent and photographer in the British Isles, I think, stood waiting in a group that far outnumbered the other spectators.

There was reason for this seeming lack of proportion. The fact was that but very few people in all of England, as well as in all of the United States, had known that General Pershing was to land that day.

Few had known that he was on the water. The British Admiralty, then in complete control of the ocean lines between America and the British Isles, had guarded well the secret. England lost Kitchener on the sea and now with the sea peril increased a hundredfold, England took pains to guard well the passage of this standard-bearer of the American millions that were to come.

Pershing and his staff stepped ashore. Lean, clean, keen—those are the words that described their appearance. That was the way they impressed their critical

brothers in arms, the all-observing military dignities that presented Britain's hearty, unreserved welcome at the water's edge. That was the way they appeared to the proud American citizens, residents of those islands, who gathered to meet them.

The British soldiers admired the height and shoulders of our first military samples. The British soldier approves of a greyhound trimness in the belt zone. He likes to look on carriage and poise. He appreciates a steady eye and stiff jaw. He is attracted by a voice that rings sharp and firm. The British soldier calls such a combination, "a real soldier."

He saw one, and more than one, that morning shortly after nine o'clock when Pershing and his staff committed the date to history by setting foot on British soil. Behind the American commander walked a staff of American officers whose soldierly bearing and general appearance brought forth sincere expressions of commendation from the assemblage on the quay.

At attention on the dock, facing the sea-stained flanks of the liner *Baltic*, a company of Royal Welsh Fusiliers stood like a frieze of clay models in stainless khaki, polished brass and shining leather.

General Pershing inspected the guard of honour with keen interest. Walking beside the American commander was the considerably stouter and somewhat shorter Lieutenant General Sir William Pitcairn Campbell, K.C.B., Chief of the Western Command of the British Home Forces.

Pershing's inspection of that guard was not the cursory one that these honourary affairs usually are. Not a detail of uniform or equipment on any of the men in the guard was overlooked. The American commander's attention was as keen to boots, rifles and belts, as though

he had been a captain preparing the small command for a strenuous inspection at the hands of some exacting superior.

As he walked down the stiff, standing line, his keen blue eyes taking in each one of the men from head to foot, he stopped suddenly in front of one man in the ranks. That man was File Three in the second set of fours. He was a pale-faced Tommy and on one of his sleeves there was displayed two slender gold bars, placed on the forearm.

The decoration was no larger than two matches in a row and on that day it had been in use hardly more than a year, yet neither its minuteness nor its meaning escaped the eyes of the American commander.

Pershing turned sharply and faced File Three.

"Where did you get your two wounds?" he asked.

"At Givenchy and Lavenze, sir," replied File Three, his face pointed stiffly ahead. File Three, even now under twenty-one years of age, had received his wounds in the early fighting that is called the battle of Loos.

"You are a man," was the sincere, all-meaning rejoinder of the American commander, who accompanied his remark with a straightforward look into the eyes of File Three.

Completing the inspection without further incident, General Pershing and his staff faced the honour guard and stood at the salute, while once more the thunderous military band played the national anthems of America and Great Britain.

The ceremony was followed by a reception in the cabin of the *Baltic*, where General Pershing received the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, the Lady Mayoress, and a delegation of civil authorities. The reception ended when General Pershing spoke a few simple words to the as-

sembled representatives of the British and American Press.

"More of us are coming," was the keynote of his modest remarks. Afterward he was escorted to the quayside station, where a special train of the type labelled Semi-Royal was ready to make the express run to London.

The reception at the dock had had none of the features of a demonstration by reason of the necessity for the ship's arrival being secret, but as soon as the *Baltic* had landed, the word of the American commander's arrival spread through Liverpool like wildfire.

The railroad from the station lay through an industrial section of the city. Through the railroad warehouses the news had preceded the train. Warehousemen, porters and draymen crowded the tops of the cotton bales and oil barrels on both sides of the track as the train passed through.

Beyond the sheds, the news had spread through the many floors of the flour mills and when the Pershing train passed, handkerchiefs and caps fluttered from every crowded door and window in the whitened walls. Most of the waving was done by a new kind of flour-girl, one who did not wave an apron because none of them were dressed that way.

From his car window, General Pershing returned the greetings of the trousered girls and women who were making England's bread while their husbands, fathers, brothers, sweethearts and sons were making German cemeteries.

In London, General Pershing and his staff occupied suites at the Savoy Hotel, and during the four or five days of the American commander's sojourn in the capital of the British Empire, a seemingly endless line of

visitors of all the Allied nationalities called to present their compliments.

The enlisted men of the General's staff occupied quarters in the old stone barracks of the Tower of London, where they were the guests of the men of that artillery organisation which prefixes an "Honourable" to its name and has been assigned for centuries to garrison duty in the Tower of London.

Our soldiers manifested naïve interest in some of England's most revered traditions and particularly in connection with historical events related to the Tower of London. On the second day of their occupation of this old fortress, one of the warders, a "Beef-eater" in full mediæval regalia, was escorting a party of the Yanks through the dungeons.

He stopped in one dungeon and lined the party up in front of a stone block in the centre of the floor. After a silence of a full minute to produce a proper degree of impressiveness for the occasion, the warder announced, in a respectful whisper:

"This is where Anne Boleyn was executed."

The lined-up Yanks took a long look at the stone block. A silence followed during the inspection. And then one regular, desiring further information, but not wishing to be led into any traps of British wit, said:

"All right, I'll bite; what did Annie do?"

Current with the arrival of our men and their reception by the honour guard of the Welsh Fusiliers there was a widespread revival of an old story which the Americans liked to tell in the barrack rooms at night.

When the Welsh Fusiliers received our men at the dock of Liverpool, they had with them their historical mascot, a large white goat with horns encased in inscribed silver. The animal wore suspended from its neck

a large silver plate, on which was inscribed a partial history of the Welsh Fusiliers.

Some of these Fusiliers told our men the story.

"It was our regiment—the Welsh Fusiliers," one of them said, "that fought you Yanks at Bunker Hill. And it was at Bunker Hill that our regiment captured the great-great-granddaddy of this same white goat, and his descendants are ever destined to be the mascot of our regiment. You see, we have still got your goat."

"But you will notice," replied one of the Yanks, "we've got the hill."

During the four days in London, General Pershing was received by King George and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace. The American commander engaged in several long conferences at the British War Office, and then with an exclusion of entertainment that was painful to the Europeans, he made arrangements to leave for his new post in France.

A specially written permission from General Pershing made it possible for me to accompany him on that historic crossing between England and France. Secret orders for the departure were given on the afternoon and evening of June 12th. Before four o'clock of the next morning, June 13th, I breakfasted in the otherwise deserted dining-room of the Savoy with the General and his staff.

Only a few sleepy-eyed attendants were in the halls and lower rooms of the Savoy. In closed automobiles we were whisked away to Charing Cross Station. We boarded a special train whose destination was unknown. The entire party was again in the hands of the Intelligence Section of the British Admiralty, and every possible means was taken to suppress all definite information concerning the departure.

The special train containing General Pershing and his staff reached Folkstone at about seven o'clock in the morning. We left the train at the dockside and boarded the swift Channel steamer moored there. A small vociferous contingent of English Tommies returning to the front from leave in "Blighty" were crowded on all decks in the stern.

With life-boats swinging out over the side and every one wearing life-preservers, we steamed out of Folkstone harbour to challenge the submarine dangers of the Channel.

The American commander occupied a forward cabin suite on the upper deck. His aides and secretaries had already transformed it into a business-like apartment. In the General's mind there was no place or time for any consideration of the dangers of the Channel crossing. Although the very waters through which we dashed were known to be infested with submarines which would have looked upon him as capital prey, I don't believe the General ever gave them as much as a thought.

Every time I looked through the open door of his cabin, he was busy dictating letters to his secretaries or orders or instructions to his aides or conferring with his Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Harboard. To the American commander, the hours necessary for the dash across the Channel simply represented a little more time which he could devote to the plans for the great work ahead of him.

Our ship was guarded on all sides and above. Swift torpedo destroyers dashed to and fro under our bow and stern and circled us continually. In the air above hydro-airplanes and dirigible balloons hovered over the waters surrounding us, keeping sharp watch for the first appearance of the dark sub-sea hulks of destruction.

THE ARRIVAL IN LONDON, SHOWING GENERAL PERSHING, MR. PAGE, FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH, LORD DERBY, AND ADMIRAL SIMS

GENERAL PERSHING BOWING TO THE CROWD IN PARIS

We did not learn until the next day that while we were making that Channel crossing, the German air forces had crossed the Channel in a daring daylight raid and were at that very hour dropping bombs on London around the very hotel which General Pershing had just vacated. Some day, after the war, I hope to ascertain whether the commander of that flight of bombing Gothas started on his expedition over London with a special purpose in view and whether that purpose concerned the supposed presence there of the commander-in-chief of the American millions that were later to change the entire complexion of the war against Germany.

It was a beautiful sunlight day. It was not long before the coast line of France began to push itself up through the distant Channel mists and make itself visible on the horizon. I stood in the bow of the ship looking toward the coast line and silent with thoughts concerning the momentousness of the approaching historical event.

It happened that I looked back amidships and saw a solitary figure standing on the bridge of the vessel. It was General Pershing. He seemed rapt in deep thought. He wore his cap straight on his head, the visor shading his eyes. He stood tall and erect, his hands behind him, his feet planted slightly apart to accommodate the gentle roll of the ship.

He faced due east and his eyes were directed toward the shores of that foreign land which we were approaching. It seemed to me as I watched him that his mind must have been travelling back more than a century to that day in history when another soldier had stood on the bridge of another vessel, crossing those same waters, but in an almost opposite direction.

It seemed to me that he must have been thinking of

that historical character who made just such a journey more than a hundred years before,—a great soldier who left his homeland to sail to other foreign shores halfway around the world and there to lend his sword in the fight for the sacred principles of Democracy. It seemed to me that day that Pershing thought of Lafayette.

As we drew close to the shore, I noticed an enormous concrete breakwater extending out from the harbour entrance. It was surmounted by a wooden railing and on the very end of it, straddling the rail, was a small French boy. His legs were bare and his feet were encased in heavy wooden shoes. On his head he wore a red stocking cap of the liberty type. As we came within hailing distance, he gave to us the first greeting that came from the shores of France to these first arriving American soldiers.

"Vive l'Amérique!" he shouted, cupping his hands to his mouth and sending his shrill voice across the water to us. Pershing on the bridge heard the salutation. He smiled, touched his hand to his hat and waved to the lad on the railing.

We landed that day at Boulogne, June 13th, 1917. Military bands massed on the quay, blared out the American National Anthem as the ship was warped alongside the dock. Other ships in the busy harbour began blowing whistles and ringing bells, loaded troop and hospital ships lying nearby burst forth into cheering. The news spread like contagion along the harbour front.

As the gangplank was lowered, French military dignitaries in dress uniforms resplendent with gold braid, buttons and medals, advanced to that part of the deck amidships where the General stood. They saluted respectfully and pronounced elaborate addresses in their native tongue. They were followed by numerous French Government

officials in civilian dress attire. The city, the department and the nation were represented in the populous delegations who presented their compliments, and conveyed to the American commander the unstinted and heartfelt welcome of the entire people of France.

Under the train sheds on the dock, long stiff, standing ranks of French poilus wearing helmets and their light blue overcoats pinned back at the knees, presented arms as the General walked down the lines inspecting them. At one end of the line, rank upon rank of French marines, and sailors with their flat hats with red tassels, stood at attention awaiting inspection.

The docks and train sheds were decorated with French and American flags and yards and yards of the mutually-owned red, white and blue. Thousands of spectators began to gather in the streets near the station, and their continuous cheers sufficed to rapidly augment their own numbers.

Accompanied by a veteran French colonel, one of whose uniform sleeves was empty, General Pershing, as a guest of the city of Boulogne, took a motor ride through the streets of this busy port city. He was quickly returned to the station, where he and his staff boarded a special train for Paris. I went with them.

That train to Paris was, of necessity, slow. It proceeded slowly under orders and with a purpose. No one in France, with the exception of a select official circle, had been aware that General Pershing was arriving that day until about thirty minutes before his ship was warped into the dock at Boulogne. It has always been a mystery to me how the French managed to decorate the station at Boulogne upon such short notice.

Thus it was that the train crawled slowly toward Paris for the purpose of giving the French capital time

to throw off the coat of war weariness that it had worn for three and a half years and don gala attire for this occasion. Paris made full use of every minute of that time, as we found when the train arrived at the French capital late in the afternoon. The evening papers in Paris had carried the news of the American commander's landing on the shores of France, and Paris was ready to receive him as Paris had never before received a world's notable.

The sooty girders of the Gare du Nord shook with cheers when the special train pulled in. The aisles of the great terminal were carpeted with red plush. A battalion of bearded poilus of the Two Hundred and Thirty-seventh Colonial Regiment was lined up on the platform like a wall of silent grey, bristling with bayonets and shiny trench helmets.

General Pershing stepped from his private car. Flashlights boomed and batteries of camera men manœuvred into positions for the lens barrage. The band of the Garde Républicaine blared forth the strains of the "Star Spangled Banner," bringing all the military to a halt and a long standing salute. It was followed by the "Marseillaise."

At the conclusion of the train-side greetings and introductions, Marshal Joffre and General Pershing walked down the platform together. The tops of the cars of every train in the station were crowded with workmen. As the tall, slender American commander stepped into view, the privileged observers on the car-tops began to cheer.

A minute later, there was a terrific roar from beyond the walls of the station. The crowds outside had heard the cheering within. They took it up with thousands of

throats. They made their welcome a ringing one. Paris took Pershing by storm.

The General was ushered into the specially decorated reception chamber, which was hung and carpeted with brilliant red velvet and draped with the Allied flags. After a brief formal exchange of greetings in this large chamber, he and his staff were escorted to the line of waiting automobiles at the side of the station in the Rue de Roubaix.

Pershing's appearance in the open was the cue for wild, unstinted applause and cheering from the crowds which packed the streets and jammed the windows of the tall buildings opposite.

General Pershing and M. Painlevé, Minister of War, took seats in a large automobile. They were preceded by a motor containing United States Ambassador Sharp and former Premier Viviani. The procession started to the accompaniment of martial music by massed military bands in the courtyard of the station. It passed through the Rue de Compiègne, the Rue de Lafayette, the Place de l'Opéra, the Boulevard des Capucines, the Place de la Madeleine, the Rue Royale, to the Place de la Concorde.

There were some fifty automobiles in the line, the rear of which was brought up by an enormous motor-bus load of the first American soldiers from the ranks to pass through the streets of Paris.

The crowds overflowed the sidewalks. They extended from the building walls out beyond the curbs and into the streets, leaving but a narrow lane through which the motors pressed their way slowly and with the exercise of much care. From the crowded balconies and windows overlooking the route, women and children tossed down showers of flowers and bits of coloured paper.

The crowds were so dense that other street traffic be-

came marooned in the dense sea of joyously excited and gesticulating French people. Vehicles thus marooned immediately became islands of vantage. They were soon covered with men and women and children, who climbed on top of them and clung to the sides to get a better look at the khaki-clad occupants of the autos.

Old grey-haired fathers of French fighting men bared their heads and with tears streaming down their cheeks shouted greetings to the tall, thin, grey-moustached American commander who was leading new armies to the support of their sons. Women heaped armfuls of roses into the General's car and into the cars of other American officers that followed him. Paris street gamins climbed the lamp-posts and waved their caps and wooden shoes and shouted shrilly.

American flags and red, white and blue bunting waved wherever the eye rested. English-speaking Frenchmen proudly explained to the uninformed that "Pershing" was pronounced "Peur-chigne" and not "Pair-shang."

Paris was not backward in displaying its knowledge of English. Gay Parisiennes were eager to make use of all the English at their command, that they might welcome the new arrivals in their native tongue.

Some of these women shouted "Hello," "Heep, heep, hourrah," "Good morning," "How are you, keed?" and "Cock-tails for two." Some of the expressions were not so inappropriate as they sounded.

Occasionally there came from the crowds a good old genuine American whoop-em-up yell. This happened when the procession passed groups of American ambulance workers and other sons of Uncle Sam, wearing the uniforms of the French, Canadian and English Corps.

They joined with Australians and South African soldiers on leave to cheer on the new-coming Americans

with such spontaneous expressions as "Come on, you Yanks," "Now let's get 'em," and "Eat 'em up, Uncle Sam."

The frequent stopping of the procession by the crowds made it happen quite frequently that the automobiles were completely surrounded by enthusiasts, who reached up and tried to shake hands with the occupants. Pretty girls kissed their hands and blew the invisible confection toward the men in khaki.

The bus-load of enlisted men bringing up the rear received dozens of bouquets from the girls. The flowers were hurled at them from all directions. Every two hundred feet the French would organise a rousing shout, *"Vive l'Amérique!"* for them.

Being the passive recipients of this unusual adulation produced only embarrassment on the part of the regulars who simply had to sit there, smiling and taking it. Just to break the one-sided nature of the demonstrations, one of the enlisted men stood up in his seat and, addressing himself to his mates, shouted:

"Come on, fellows, let's give 'em a 'veever' ourselves. Now all together."

The bus-load rose to its feet like one man and shouted "Veever for France." Their "France" rhymed with "pants," so that none of the French understood it, but they did understand the sentiment behind the husky American lungs.

Through such scenes as these, the procession reached the great Place de la Concorde. In this wide, paved, open space an enormous crowd had assembled. As the autos appeared the cheering, the flower throwing, the tumultuous kiss-blowing began. It increased in intensity as the motors stopped in front of the Hôtel Crillon into which General Pershing disappeared, followed by his staff.

Immediately the cheering changed to a tremendous clamorous demand for the General's appearance on the balcony in front of his apartments.

"Au balcon, au balcon," were the cries that filled the Place. The crowd would not be denied.

General Pershing stepped forth on the balcony. He stood behind the low marble railing, and between two enormous white-stoned columns. A cluster of the Allied flags was affixed to each column. The American commander surveyed the scene in front of him.

There are no trees or shrubbery in the vast Place de la Concorde. Its broad paved surface is interrupted only by artistically placed groups of statuary and fountains.

To the General's right, as he faced the Place, were the trees and greenery of the broad Champs Elysées. On his left were the fountains and the gardens of the Tuilleries. At the further end of the Place, five hundred feet straight in front of him, were the banks and the ornamental bridges of the Seine, beyond which could be seen the columned façade of the Chambre des Deputies, and above and beyond that, against the blue sky of a late June afternoon, rose the majestic golden dome of the Invalides, over the tomb of Napoleon.

General Pershing looked down upon the sea of faces turned up toward him, and then it seemed that nature desired to play a part in the ceremony of that great day. A soft breeze from the Champs Elysées touched the cluster of flags on the General's right and from all the Allied emblems fastened there it selected one flag.

The breeze tenderly caught the folds of this flag and wafted them across the balcony on which the General bowed. He saw and recognised that flag. He extended his hand, caught the flag in his fingers and pressed it to his lips. All France and all America represented in that

vast throng that day cheered to the mighty echo when Pershing kissed the tri-colour of France.

It was a tremendous, unforgettable incident. It was exceeded by no other incident during those days of receptions and ceremonies, except one. That was an incident which occurred not in the presence of thousands, but in a lonely old burial ground on the outskirts of Paris. This happened several days after the demonstration in the Place de la Concorde.

On that day of bright sunshine, General Pershing and a small party of officers, French and American, walked through the gravel paths of Picpus Cemetery in the suburbs of Paris, where the bodies of hundreds of those who made the history of France are buried.

Several French women in deep mourning courtesied as General Pershing passed. His party stopped in front of two marble slabs that lay side by side at the foot of a granite monument. From the General's party a Frenchman stepped forward and, removing his high silk hat, he addressed the small group in quiet, simple tones and well-chosen English words. He was the Marquis de Chambrun. He said:

"On this spot one can say that the historic ties between our nations are not the result of the able schemes of skilful diplomacy. No, the principles of liberty, justice and independence are the glorious links between our nations.

"These principles have enlisted the hearts of our democracies. They have made the strength of their union and have brought about the triumph of their efforts.

"To-day, when, after nearly a century and a half, America and France are engaged in a conflict for the

same cause upon which their early friendship was based, we are filled with hope and confidence.

"We know that our great nations are together with our Allies invincible, and we rejoice to think that the United States and France are reunited in the fight for liberty, and will reconsecrate, in a new victory, their everlasting friendship of which your presence to-day at this grave is an exquisite and touching token."

General Pershing advanced to the tomb and placed upon the marble slab an enormous wreath of pink and white roses. Then he stepped back. He removed his cap and held it in both hands in front of him. The bright sunlight shone down on his silvery grey hair. Looking down at the grave, he spoke in a quiet, impressive tone four simple, all-meaning words:

"Lafayette, we are here."

CHAPTER III

THE LANDING OF THE FIRST AMERICAN CONTINGENT IN FRANCE

The first executive work of the American Expeditionary Forces overseas was performed in a second floor suite of the Crillon Hotel on the Place de la Concorde in Paris. This suite was the first temporary headquarters of the American commander.

The tall windows of the rooms looked down on the historic Place which was the scene of so many momentous events in French history. The windows were hardly a hundred yards from the very spot where the guillotine dripped red in the days of the Terror. It was here that the heads of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette dropped into the basket.

During General Pershing's comparatively brief occupancy of these headquarters, the reception rooms were constantly banked with fresh-cut flowers, the daily gifts of the French people,—flowers that were replenished every twenty-four hours. The room was called the "Salon des Batailles."

In one corner of the room, near a window overlooking the Place, was General Pershing's table. It was adorned with a statuette of General Joffre and a cluster of miniatures of captured German standards. Extending from the floor to the ceiling on one of the walls were two enormous oil copies of "La Bataille de Fontenoy" and the "Passage du Rhin." A large flag-draped photograph of President Wilson occupied a place of honour on an easel at one end of the room.

During the first week that General Pershing stopped at the hotel, the sidewalk and street beneath his windows were constantly crowded with people. The crowds waited there all day long, just in the hope of catching a glimpse of the American commander if he should happen to be leaving or returning to his quarters. It seemed as if every Parisienne and Parisian had taken upon herself and himself the special duty of personally observing General Pershing, of waving him an enthusiastic "vive" and possibly being within the scope of his returning salute.

But the American commander would not permit demonstrations and celebrations to interfere with the important duties that he faced. Two days are all that were devoted to these social ceremonies which the enthusiastic and hospitable French would have made almost endless. Dinners, receptions and parades were ruthlessly erased from the working day calendar. The American commander sounded the order "To work" with the same martial precision as though the command had been a sudden call "To arms."

On the morning of the third day after General Pershing's arrival in Paris, the typewriters began clicking incessantly and the telephones began ringing busily in the large building which was occupied on that day as the headquarters of the American Expeditionary Forces in France.

This building was Numbers 27 and 31 Rue de Constantine. It faced the trees and shrubbery bordering the approach to the Seine front of the Invalides. The building was two stories high with grey-white walls and a mansard roof. At that time it could be immediately identified as the one in front of which stood a line of American motor cars, as the one where trim United

States regulars walked sentry post past the huge doors through which frequent orderlies dashed with messages.

Ten days before, the building had been the residence of a Marquis and had contained furniture and art valued at millions of francs. All of those home-like characteristics had been removed so effectively that even the name of the kindly Marquis had been forgotten. I am sure that he, himself, at the end of that ten-day period could not have recognised his converted salons where the elaborate ornamentation had been changed to the severe simplicity typical of a United States Army barracks.

General Pershing's office was located on the second floor of the house and in one corner. In those early days it was carpetless and contained almost a monkish minimum of furniture. There were the General's chair and his desk on which there stood a peculiar metal standard for one of those one-piece telephone sets with which Americans are familiar only in French stage settings. A book-case with glass doors, a stenographer's table and chair, and two red plush upholstered chairs, for visitors, comprised the furniture inventory of the room.

One of the inner walls of the room was adorned with a large mirror with a gilt frame, and in the other wall was a plain fireplace. There were tall windows in the two outer walls which looked out on the Rue de Constantine and the Rue de Grenelle. Opposite the Rue de Grenelle windows there was a small, deeply shaded park where children rolled hoops during the heat of the day and where convalescent French soldiers sat and watched the children at play or perhaps discussed the war and other things with the nurse-maids.

This was the first workshop in France of the American commander-in-chief. Adjoining rooms to the left and right were occupied by the General's staff and his

aides. And it was in these rooms that the overseas plans for the landing of the first American armed contingent in France were formulated.

It is safe now to mention that St. Nazaire on the west coast of France was the port at which our first armed forces disembarked. I was in Paris when the information of their coming was whispered to a few chosen correspondents who were to be privileged to witness this historical landing.

This was the first time in the history of our nation that a large force of armed Americans was to cross the seas to Europe. For five and a half months prior to the date of their landing, the ruthless submarine policy of the Imperial German Government had been in effect, and our troop ships with those initial thousands of American soldiers represented the first large Armada to dare the ocean crossing since Germany had instituted her sub-sea blockade zone in February of that same year.

Thus it was that any conversation concerning the fact that our men were on the seas and at the mercy of the U-boats was conducted with the greatest of care behind closed doors. In spite of the efforts of the French agents of contra espionage, Paris and all France, for that matter, housed numerous spies. There were some anxious moments while that first contingent was on the water.

Our little group of correspondents was informed that we should be conducted by American officers to the port of landing, but the name of that port was withheld from us. By appointment we met at a Paris railroad station where we were provided with railroad tickets. We took our places in compartments and rode for some ten or twelve hours, arriving early the next morning at St. Nazaire.

This little village on the coast of Brittany was tucked

away there in the golden sands of the seashore. Its houses had walls of white stucco and gabled roofs of red tile. In the small rolling hills behind it were green orchards and fields of yellow wheat. The villagers, old women in their starched white head-dresses and old men wearing faded blue smocks and wooden shoes, were unmindful of the great event for which history had destined their village.

On the night before the landing the townspeople had retired with no knowledge of what was to happen on the following day. In the morning they awoke to find strange ships that had come in the night, riding safely at anchor in the harbour. The wooden shutters began to pop open with bangs as excited heads, encased in peaked flannel nightcaps, protruded themselves from bedroom windows and directed anxious queries to those who happened to be abroad at that early hour.

St. Nazaire came to life more quickly that morning than ever before in its history. The Mayor of the town was one of the busiest figures on the street. In high hat and full dress attire, he hurried about trying to assemble the village orchestra of octogenarian fiddlers and flute players to play a welcome for the new arrivals. The townspeople neglected their *café au lait* to rush down to the quay to look at the new ships.

The waters of the harbour sparkled in the early morning sunlight. The dawn had been grey and misty, but now nature seemed to smile. The strange ships from the other side of the world were grey in hulk but now there were signs of life and colour aboard each one of them.

Beyond the troop ships lay the first United States warships, units of that remarkable fighting organisation which in the year that was to immediately follow that

very day were to escort safely across three thousand miles of submarine-infested water more than a million and a half American soldiers.

The appearance of these first warships of ours was novel to the French townspeople. Our ships had peculiar looking masts, masts which the townspeople compared to the baskets which the French peasants carry on their backs when they harvest the lettuce. Out further from the shore were our low-lying torpedo destroyers, pointed toward the menace of the outer deep.

Busy puffing tugs were warping the first troop ship toward the quay-side. Some twenty or thirty American sailors and soldiers, who had been previously landed by launch to assist in the disembarkation, were handling the lines on the dock.

When but twenty feet from the quay-side, the successive decks of the first troop ship took on the appearance of mud-coloured layers from the khaki uniforms of the stiff standing ranks of our men. A military band on the forward deck was playing the national anthems of France and America and every hand was being held at the salute.

As the final bars of the "Star Spangled Banner" crashed out and every saluting hand came snappily down, one American soldier on an upper deck leaned over the rail and shouted to a comrade on the shore his part of the first exchange of greetings between our fighting men upon this historic occasion. Holding one hand to his lips, he seriously enquired:

"Say, do they let the enlisted men in the saloons here?"

Another soldier standing near the stern rail had a different and more serious interrogation to make. He appeared rather blasé about it as he leaned over the rail

THE FIRST AMERICAN FOOT ON FRENCH SOIL

THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF FRANCE

and, directing his voice toward a soldier on the dock, casually demanded:

"Say, where the Hell is all this trouble, anyhow?"

These two opening sorties produced a flood of others. The most common enquiry was: "What's the name of this place?" and "Is this France or England?" When answers were made to these questions, the recipients of the information, particularly if they happened to be "old-timers in the army," would respond by remarking, "Well, it's a damn sight better than the Mexican border."

As our men came over the ship's side and down the runways, there was no great reception committee awaiting them. Among the most interested spectators of the event were a group of stolid German prisoners of war and the two French soldiers guarding them. The two Frenchmen talked volubly with a wealth of gesticulation, while the Germans maintained their characteristic glumness.

The German prisoners appeared to be anything but discouraged at the sight. Some of them even wore a smile that approached the supercilious. With some of them that smile seemed to say: "You can't fool us. We know these troops are not Americans. They are either Canadians or Australians coming from England. Our German U-boats won't let Americans cross the ocean."

Some of those German prisoners happened to have been in America before the war. They spoke English and recognised the uniforms of our men. Their silent smiles seemed to say: "Well, they don't look so good at that. We have seen better soldiers. And, besides, there is only a handful of them. Not enough can come to make any difference. Anyhow, it is too late now. The war will be over before any appreciable number can get here."

But the stream of khaki continued to pour out of the ship's side. Company after company of our men, loaded down with packs and full field equipment, lined up on the dock and marched past the group of German prisoners.

"We're passing in review for you, Fritzie," one irrepressible from our ranks shouted, as the marching line passed within touching distance of the prisoner group. The Germans responded only with quizzical little smiles and silence.

Escorted by our own military bands, the regiments marched through the main street of the village. The bands played "Dixie"—a new air to France. The regiments as a whole did not present the snappy, marching appearance that they might have presented. There was a good reason for this. Sixty per cent. of them were recruits. It had been wisely decided to replace many of the old regular army men in the ranks with newly enlisted men, so that these old veterans could remain in America and train the new drafts.

However, that which impressed the French people was the individual appearance of these samples of American manhood. Our men were tall and broad and brawny. They were young and vigorous. Their eyes were keen and snappy. Their complexions ranged in shade from the swarthy sun-tanned cheeks of border veterans to the clear pink skins of city youngsters. But most noticeable of all to the French people were the even white rows of teeth which our men displayed when they smiled. Good dentistry and clean mouths are essentially American.

The villagers of St. Nazaire, old men and women, girls and school children, lined the curbs as our men marched through the town. The line of march was over a broad esplanade that circled the sandy beach of the

bay, and then wound upward into the higher ground back of the town. The road here was bordered on either side with ancient stone walls covered with vines and over the tops of the walls there extended fruit-laden branches to tempt our men with their ripe, red lusciousness. As they marched through the heat and dust of that June day, many succumbed to the temptations and paid for their appetites with inordinately violent colics that night.

A camp site had been partially prepared for their reception. It was located close to a French barracks. The French soldiers and gangs of German prisoners, who had been engaged in this work, had no knowledge of the fact that they were building the first American cantonment in France. They thought they were constructing simply an extension of the French encampment.

That first contingent, composed of United States Infantrymen and Marines, made its first camp in France with the smallest amount of confusion, considering the fact that almost three-quarters of them hadn't been in uniform a month. It was but several hours after arriving at the camp that the smoke was rising from the busy camp stoves and the aroma of American coffee, baked beans and broiled steaks was in the air.

On the afternoon of that first day some of the men were given permission to visit the town. They began to take their first lessons in French as they went from café to café in futile efforts to connect up with such unknown commodities as cherry pie or ham and egg sandwiches. Upon meeting one another in the streets, our men would invariably ask: "Have you come across any of these FROGS that talk American?"

There was nothing disrespectful about the terms Frogs or Froggies as applied to their French comrades in arms.

American officers hastened to explain to French officers that the one piece of information concerning France most popularly known in America was that it was the place where people first learned to eat frog legs and snails.

The Frenchmen, on the other hand, were somewhat inclined to believe that these first Americans didn't live up to the European expectations of Americans. Those European expectations had been founded almost entirely upon the translations of dime novels and moving picture thrillers of the Wild West and comedy variety.

Although our men wore the high, broad-brimmed felt hats, they didn't seem sufficiently cowboyish. Although the French people waited expectantly, none of these Americans dashed through the main street of the village on bucking bronchos, holding their reins in their teeth and at the same time firing revolvers from either hand. Moreover, none of our men seemed to conclude their dinners in the expected American fashion of slapping one another in the face with custard pies.

There was to be seen on the streets of St. Nazaire that day some representative black Americans, who had also landed in that historical first contingent. There was a strange thing about these negroes.

It will be remembered that in the early stages of our participation in the war it had been found that there was hardly sufficient khaki cloth to provide uniforms for all of our soldiers. That had been the case with these American negro soldiers.

But somewhere down in Washington, somehow or other, some one resurrected an old, large, heavy iron key and this, inserted into an ancient rusty lock, had opened some long forgotten doors in one of the Government arsenals. There were revealed old dust-covered bundles wrapped up in newspapers, yellow with age, and when

these wrappings of the past were removed, there were seen the uniforms of old Union blue that had been laid away back in '65—uniforms that had been worn by men who fought and bled and died to free the first black American citizens.

And here on this foreign shore, on this day in June more than half a century later, the sons and the grandsons of those same freed slaves wore those same uniforms of Union blue as they landed in France to fight for a newer freedom.

Some of these negroes were stevedores from the lower Mississippi levees. They sang as they worked in their white army undershirts, across the chest of which they had penciled in blue and red, strange mystic devices, religious phrases and hoodoo signs, calculated to contribute the charm of safety to the running of the submarine blockade.

Two of these American negroes, walking up the main street of St. Nazaire, saw on the other side of the thoroughfare a brother of colour wearing the lighter blue uniform of a French soldier. This French negro was a Colonial black from the north of Africa and of course had spoken nothing but French from the day he was born.

One of the American negroes crossed the street and accosted him.

"Looka here, boy," he enquired good-naturedly, "what can you all tell me about this here wah?"

"Comment, monsieur?" responded the non-understanding French black, and followed the rejoinder with a torrent of excited French.

The American negro's mouth fell open. For a minute he looked startled, and then he bulged one large round white eye suspiciously at the French black, while he inwardly debated on the possibility that he had become

suddenly colour blind. Having reassured himself, however, that his vision was not at fault, he made a sudden decision and started on a new tack.

"Now, never mind that high-faluting language," he said. "You all just tell me what you know about this here wah and quit you' putting on aihs."

The puzzled French negro could only reply with another explosion of French interrogations, coupled with vigorous gesticulations. The American negro tried to talk at the same time and both of them endeavouring to make the other understand, increased the volumes of their tones until they were standing there waving their arms and shouting into one another's faces. The American negro gave it up.

"My Gawd," he said, shaking his head as he recrossed the street and joined his comrades, "this is shore some funny country. They got the mos' ignorantest niggers I ever saw."

Still, those American blacks were not alone in their difficulties over the difference in languages. I discussed the matter with one of our white regulars who professed great experience, having spent almost one entire day on mutual guard with a French sentry over a pile of baggage.

"You know," he said, "I don't believe these Frenchies ever will learn to speak English."

Our veterans from Mexico and the border campaigns found that their smattering of Spanish did not help them much. But still every one seemed to manage to get along all right. Our soldiers and the French soldiers in those early days couldn't understand each other's languages, but they could understand each other.

This strange paradox was analysed for me by a young American Lieutenant who said he had made a twelve-

hour study of the remarkable camaraderie that had immediately sprung up between the fighting men of France and the fighting men of America. In explaining this relationship, he said:

"You see, we think the French are crazy," he said, "and the French know damn well we are."

Those of our men who had not brought small French and English dictionaries with them, made hurried purchases of such handy articles and forthwith began to practise. The French people did likewise.

I saw one young American infantryman seated at a table in front of one of the sidewalk cafés on the village square. He was dividing his attention between a fervent admiration of the pretty French waitress, who stood smiling in front of him, and an intense interest in the pages of his small hand dictionary.

She had brought his glass of beer and he had paid for it, but there seemed to be a mutual urge for further conversation. The American would look first at her and then he would look through the pages of the book again. Finally he gave slow and painful enunciation of the following request:

"Mad-am-moy-sell, donnie moy oon baysa."

She laughed prettily as she caught his meaning almost immediately, and she replied:

"Doughboy, ware do you get zat stuff?"

"Aw, Hell," said the young Infantryman, as he closed the book with a snap. "I knew they'd let those sailors ashore before us."

From the very first day of the landing we began to learn things from the French and they began to learn things from us. Some of our men learned that it was quite possible to sip an occasional glass of beer or light

wine without feeling a sudden inclination to buy and consume all there remained in the café.

The French soldiers were intensely interested in the equipment of our land forces and in the uniforms of both our soldiers and sailors. They sought by questions to get an understanding of the various insignia by which the Americans designated their rank.

One thing that they noticed was a small, round white pasteboard tag suspended on a yellow cord from the upper left hand breast pocket of either the blue jackets of our sailors or the khaki shirts of our soldiers. So prevalent was this tag, which in reality marked the wearer as the owner of a package of popular tobacco, that the French almost accepted it as uniform equipment.

The attitude of our first arriving American soldiers toward the German prisoners who worked in gangs on construction work in the camps and rough labour along the docks was a curious one. Not having yet encountered in battle the brothers of these same docile appearing captives, our men were even inclined to treat the prisoners with deference almost approaching admiration.

In a measure, the Germans returned this feeling. The arrival of the Americans was really cheering to them. The prisoners disliked the French because they had been taught to do so from childhood. They hated the English because that was the hate with which they went into battle.

It sounds incongruous now but, nevertheless, it was a fact then that the German prisoners confined at that first American sea-base really seemed to like the American soldiers. Maybe it was because any change of masters or guards was a relief in the uneventful existence which had been theirs since the day of their capture. Perhaps the feeling was one of distinct kindred, based on a fa-

miliarity with Americans and American customs—a familiarity which had been produced by thousands of letters which Germans in America had written to their friends in Germany before the war. On the other hand, it may simply have been by reason of America's official disavowal of any animosity toward the German people.

One day I watched some of those prisoners unloading supplies at one of the docks in St. Nazaire, more or less under the eyes of an American sentry who stood nearby. One group of four Germans were engaged in carrying what appeared to be a large wooden packing case. Casually, and as if by accident, the case was dropped to the ground and cracked.

Instantly one of the prisoners' hands began to furtively investigate the packages revealed by the break. The other prisoners busied themselves as if preparing to lift the box again. The first German pulled a spoon from his bootleg, plunged it into the crevice in the broken box and withdrew it heaped with granulated sugar. With a quick movement he conveyed the stolen sweet to his mouth and that gapping orifice closed quickly on the sugar, while his stoical face immediately assumed its characteristic downcast look. He didn't dare move his lips or jaws for fear of detection.

Of course these Germans had been receiving but a scant ration of sugar, but their lot had been no worse than that of the French soldiers guarding them previously, who got no sugar either. American soldiers then guarding those prisoners reported only a few of them for confinement for these human thefts.

Surreptitiously, the American guards would sometimes leave cigarettes where the prisoners could get them, and even though the action did violate the rules of discipline, it helped to develop further the human side of the giver

and the recipient and at the same time had the result of making the prisoners do more work for their new guards.

It should be specially stated that lenience could not and was not extended to the point of fraternisation. But the relationship that seemed to exist between the German prisoners and American soldiers at that early date revealed undeniably the absence of any mutual hate.

Around one packing case on the dock I saw, one day, a number of German prisoners who were engaged in unpacking bundles from America, and passing them down a line of waiting hands that relayed them to a freight car. One of the Germans leaning over the case straightened up with a rumpled newspaper in his hand. He had removed it from a package. A look of indescribable joy came across his face.

"Deutscher, Deutscher," he cried, pointing to the Gothic type. The paper was a copy of the New York *Staats-Zeitung*.

The lot of those prisoners was not an unhappy one. To me it seemed very doubtful whether even a small percentage of them would have accepted liberty if it carried with it the necessity of returning to German trenches.

Those men knew what war was. They had crossed No Man's Land. Now they were far back from the blazing front in a comparatively peaceful country beyond the sound of the guns. If their lot at that time was to be characterised as "war," then in the opinion of those Germans, war was not what Sherman said it was.

Their attitude more resembled that of the unkissed spinster who was taken captive when the invading army captured the town. She flung herself into the arms of

the surprised commander of the invaders and smilingly whispered, "War is war."

The German prison camps at St. Nazaire were inspected by General Pershing on the third day of the American landing when he, with his staff, arrived from Paris. The General and his party arrived early in the morning in a pouring rain. The American commander-in-chief then held the rank of a Major General. In the harbour was the flagship of Rear Admiral Gleaves.

There was no delay over the niceties of etiquette when the question arose as to whether the Rear Admiral should call on the Major General or the Major General should call on the Rear Admiral.

The Major General settled the subject with a sentence. He said, "The point is that I want to see him," and with no further ado about it General Pershing and his staff visited the Admiral on his flagship. After his inspection of our first contingent, General Pershing said:

"This is the happiest day of the busy days which I have spent in France preparing for the arrival of the first contingent. To-day I have seen our troops safe on French soil, landing from transports that were guarded in their passage overseas by the resourceful vigilance of our Navy.

"Now, our task as soldiers lies before us. We hope, with the aid of the French leaders and experts who have placed all the results of their experience at our disposal, to make our forces worthy in skill and in determination, to fight side by side in arms with the armies of France."

CHAPTER IV

THROUGH THE SCHOOL OF WAR

Clip the skyline from the Blue Ridge, arch it over with arboreal vistas from the forests of the Oregon, reflect the two in the placid waters of the Wisconsin—and you will have some conception of the perfect Eden of beauty in which the first contingent of the American Expeditionary Forces trained in France.

Beckoning white roads curl through the rolling hills like ribbons of dental cream squeezed out evenly on rich green velour. Châteaux, pearl white centres in settings of emerald green, push their turrets and bastions above the mossy plush of the mountain side. Lazy little streams silver the valleys with their aimless wanderings.

It was a peaceful looking garden of pastoral delight that United States soldiers had picked out for their martial training ground. It was a section whose physical appearance was untouched by the three years of red riot and roar that still rumbled away just a few miles to the north.

The training area was located in the Vosges, in east central France. By train, it was a nine-hour day trip from Paris. It was located about an hour's motor ride behind the front lines, which at that time were close to the north of the cities of Nancy and Toul.

The troops were billeted in a string of small villages that comprised one side of the letter V. French troops and instructing officers occupied the other converging line of the letter. Between the two lines was the area in which our men trained. Where the two lines converged

was the town of Gondercourt, the headquarters of Major General Seibert, the Commander of the first American division in France.

The area had long since been stripped of male civilian population that could be utilised for the French ranks. The war had taken the men and the boys, but had left the old people and children to till the fields, tend the cattle, prune the hedges and trim the roads.

With the advent of our troops, the restful scene began to change. Treeless ridges carpeted with just enough green to veil the rocky formation of the ground began to break out with a superficial rash of the colour of fresh earth. In rows and circles, by angles and zigzags, the training trenches began to take form daily under the pick and shovel exercises of French and Americans working side by side.

Along the white roads, clay-coloured rectangles that moved evenly, like brown caravans, represented the marching units of United States troops. The columns of bluish-grey that passed them with shorter, quicker steps, were companies of those tireless Frenchmen, who after almost three years of the front line real thing, now played at a mimic war of make-believe, with taller and heavier novitiates.

Those French troops were Alpine Chasseurs—the famous Blue Devils. They wore dark blue caps, which resemble tam o'shanters, but are not. They were proud of the distinction which their uniform gave them. They were proud of their great fighting records. One single battalion of them boasted that of the twenty-six officers who led it into the first fight at the opening of the war, only four of them existed.

It was a great advantage for our men to train under such instructors. Correspondents who had been along

the fronts before America's entry into the war, had a great respect for the soldierly capacity of these same fighting Frenchmen; not only these sturdy young sons of France who wore the uniform, but the older French soldiers—ranging in age from forty to fifty-five years—who had been away to the fronts since the very beginning of the war.

We had seen them many, many times. Miles upon miles of them, in the motor trucks along the roads. Twenty of them rode in each truck. They sat on two side benches facing the centre of the trucks. They were men actually bent forward from the weight of the martial equipment strapped to their bodies. They seemed to carry inordinate loads—knapsacks, blanket roll, spare shoes, haversacks, gas masks, water bottles, ammunition belts, grenade aprons, rifle, bayonet and helmet.

Many of them were very old men. They had thick black eyebrows and wore long black beards. They were tired, weary men. We had seen them in the camions, each man resting his head on the shoulder of the man seated beside him. The dust of the journey turned their black beards grey. On the front seat of the camion a sleepless one handled the wheel, while beside him the relief driver slept on the seat.

Thus they had been seen, mile upon mile of them, thousand upon thousand of them, moving ever up and down those roads that paralleled the six hundred and fifty miles of front from Flanders to the Alps—moving always. Thus they had been seen night and day, winter and summer, for more than three long years, always trying to be at the place where the enemy struck. The world knows and the world is thankful that they always were there.

It was under such veteran instructors as these that

our first Americans in France trained, there, in the Vosges, in a garden spot of beauty, in the province that boasts the birthplace of Jeanne d'Arc. On the few leave days, many of our men, with permission, would absent themselves from camp, and make short pilgrimages over the hills to the little town of Domremy to visit the house in which the Maid of Orleans was born.

Our men were eager to learn. I observed them daily at their training tasks. One day when they had progressed as far as the use of the New French automatic rifles, I visited one of the ranges to witness the firing.

Just under the crest of the hill was a row of rifle pits, four feet deep in the slaty white rock. On the opposite hill, across the marshy hollow, at a distance of two hundred yards, was a line of wooden targets, painted white with black circles. Poised at intervals on the forward edge of the pits were a number of automatic rifles of the type used by the French army. An American soldier and a French soldier attended each one, the former in the firing position and the latter instructing.

The rear bank of the pits was lined with French and American officers. The order, "Commence firing," was given, and white spurts of rock dust began dancing on the opposite hill, while splinters began to fly from some of the wooden targets.

At one end of the firing trench a raw American recruit, who admitted that he had never handled an automatic rifle before, flushed to his hat-brim and gritted his teeth viciously as his shots, registering ten feet above the targets, brought forth laughter and exclamations from the French soldiers nearby. He rested on his gun long enough to ask an interpreter what the Frenchmen were talking about.

"They say," the interpreter replied, "that you belong to the anti-aircraft service."

The recruit tightened his grip on his rifle and lowered his aim with better results. At the end of his first fifty shots he was placing one in three on the target and the others were registering close in.

"Bravo!" came from a group of French officers at the other end of the trench, where another American, older in the service, had signalised his first experiences with the new firearm by landing thirty targets out of thirty-four shots, and four of the targets were bull's-eyes. The French instructors complimented him on the excellence of his marksmanship, considering his acknowledged unfamiliarity with the weapon.

Further along the depression, in another set of opposing trenches and targets, a row of French machine guns manned by young Americans, sprayed lead with ear-splitting abandon, sometimes reaching the rate of five hundred shots a minute. Even with such rapidity, the Americans encountered no difficulties with the new pieces.

French veterans, who for three years had been using those same guns against German targets, hovered over each piece, explaining in half French and half English, and answering in the same mixture questions on ways and means of getting the best results from the weapons.

Here a chasseur of the ranks would stop the firing of one American squad, with a peremptory, "Regardez." He would proceed with pantomime and more or less connected words, carrying the warning that firing in such a manner would result in jamming the guns, a condition which would be fatal in case the targets in the other trenches were charging upon the guns.

Then he showed the correct procedure, and the Yanks, watchfully alert to his every move, changed their method

and signified their pleasure with the expression of "Trays beans," and "Mercy's."

"Do you think it would have resulted in a quicker and possibly more understanding training if these Americans were instructed by British veterans instead of French?" I asked an American Staff Officer, who was observing the demonstration.

"I may have thought so at first," the officer replied, "but not now. The explanations which our men in the ranks are receiving from the French soldiers in the ranks are more than word instructions. They are object lessons in which gesticulation and pantomime are used to act out the movement or subject under discussion.

"The French are great actors, and I find that American soldiers unacquainted with the French language are able to understand the French soldiers who are unacquainted with the English language much better than the American officers, similarly handicapped, can understand the French officers.

"I should say that some time would be lost if all of our troops were to be trained by French soldiers, but I believe that this division under French tutelage will be better able to teach the new tactics to the new divisions that are to follow than it would be if it had speedily passed through training camps like the British system, for instance, where it must be taken for granted that verbal, instead of actual, instruction is the means of producing a speeding up of training."

Thus it was that our first American contingent in France was in training for something more than service on the line. It rapidly qualified into an expert corps from which large numbers of capable American instructors were later withdrawn and used for the training of our millions of men that followed.

This achievement was only accomplished by the exercise of strict disciplinarian measures by every American officer in the then small expedition. One day, in the early part of August, 1917, a whirlwind swept through the string of French villages where the first contingent was training.

The whirlwind came down the main road in a cloud of dust. It sped on the fleeting tires of a high-powered motor which flew from its dust-grey hood a red flag with two white stars. It blew into the villages and out, through the billets and cook tents, mess halls, and picket lines. The whirlwind was John J. Pershing.

The commander-in-chief "hit" the training area early in the morning and his coming was unannounced. Before evening he had completed a stern inspection which had left only one impression in the minds of the inspected, and that impression was to the effect that more snap and pep, more sharpness and keenness were needed.

At the conclusion of the inspection all of the officers of the contingent were agreeing that the whirlwind visitation was just what had been needed to arouse the mettle and spirit in an organisation comprised of over fifty per cent. raw recruits. Many of the officers themselves had been included in the pointed criticisms which the commander directed against the persons and things that met disfavour in his eyes.

The night following that inspection or "raid," as it was called, it would have been safe to say that nowhere in the area was there a recruit who did not know, in a manner that he would not forget, the correct position of a soldier—the precise, stiff, snappy attitude to be presented when called to attention. The enlisted men whose heels did not click when they met, whose shoulders slouched, whose chins missed the proper angle, whose

eyes were not "front" during the inspection, underwent embarrassing penalties, calculated to make them remember.

"Have this man fall out," General Pershing directed, as he stood before a recruit whose attitude appeared sloppy; "teach him the position of a soldier and have him stand at attention for five minutes."

One company which had prided itself upon having some of the best embryonic bomb-throwers in the contingent, contributed a number of victims to the above penalties, and as the General's train of automobiles swirled out of the village, the main street seemed to be dotted with silent khaki-clad statues doing their five minute sentences of rigidity.

"What about your men's shoes?" General Pershing asked a captain sharply, while he directed his eyes along a company line of feet whose casings seemed to be approaching the shabby.

"We need hobnails, sir," replied the captain.

"Get them"—the words snapped out from beneath Pershing's close-cropped grey moustache. "Requisition hobnails. Your men need them. Get them from the quartermaster."

The American commander stepped into the darkness of a large stone-walled stable, which represented the billeting accommodations for ten American soldiers. A dog curled in the doorway growled and showed its teeth. The General stepped past the menacing animal, and without heeding its snarls close to his heels, started questioning the sergeants in charge.

"Are any cattle kept in here?" he asked.

"No, sir," replied the sergeant.

"Detail more men with brooms and have it aired thoroughly every day."

Observed from a distance, when he was speaking with battalion and regimental commanders, the commander manifested no change of attitude from that which marked his whole inspection. He frequently employed his characteristic gesture of emphasis—the wadding of his left palm with his right fist or the energetic opening and closing of the right hand. When the Pershing whirlwind sped out of the training area that night, after the first American inspection in France, it left behind it a thorough realisation of the sternness of the work which was ahead of our army.

The development of a rigid discipline was the American commander's first objective in the training schedules which he ordered his staff to devise. After this schedule had been in operation not ten days, I happened to witness a demonstration of American discipline which might be compared to an improved incident of Damocles dining under the suspended sword at the feast of Dionysius.

A battalion of American Infantry was at practice on one of the training fields. The grenade-throwing exercises had been concluded and the order had been given to "fall in" preparatory to the march back to the camp.

Upon the formation of the long company lines, end on end down the side of the hill, the order, "attention," was sharply shouted bringing the men to the rigid pose which permits the eyes to wander neither to the right nor to the left, above nor below, but straightforward.

As the thousand men stood there, rigid and silent, a sudden disturbance took place in the sky above them. Shells began exploding up there. At the same time the men in the ranks could distinctly hear the whirr and the hum of aeroplane motors above them.

Almost every day reports had been received that German planes had evaded the Allied aerial patrols along

the front and had made long flights behind our lines for the dual purposes of observing and bombing.

As the American battalion stood stiff and motionless, I knew that the thought was passing through the minds of every man there that here, at last, was the expected visitation of the German flyers and that a terrific bomb from above would be the next event on the programme. The men recognised the reports of the anti-aircraft guns blazing away, and the sound of the motors suggested a close range target.

The sound seemed to indicate that the planes were flying low. The American ranks knew that something was going on immediately above them. They did not know what it was, but it seems needless to state that they wanted to know. Still the ranks stood as stiff as rows of clay-coloured statues.

An almost irresistible impulse to look upward, a strong instinctive urging to see the danger that impended, and the stern regulations of "eyes front" that goes with the command "attention," comprised the elements of conflict that went on in each of the thousand heads in that battalion line.

In front of each platoon, the lieutenants and captains stood with the same rigid eyes front facing the men. If one of the company officers had relaxed to the extent of taking one fleeting upward glance, it is doubtful whether the men could have further resisted the same inclination, but not a man shifted his gaze from the direction prescribed by the last command.

One plane passed closely overhead and nothing happened. Three more followed and still no bombs fell, and then the tense incident was closed by the calling out of the order of the march and, in squads of four, the battalion wheeled into the road and marched back to billets.

As one company went by singing (talking was permitted upon the freedom of routstep), I heard one of the men say that he had thought all along that the officers would not have made them stand there at attention if the danger had not been over.

"As far as I knew, it was over," a comrade added. "It was right over my head." And in this light manner the men forgot the incident as they resumed their marching song.

When Mr. W. Hollenzollern of Potsdam put singing lessons in the curriculum of his soldiers' training, a tremor of military giggling was heard around the world. But in August, 1914, when Mars smiled at the sight of those same soldiers, marching across the frontiers east, south and west, under their throaty barrage of "Deutschland, Deutschland, Über Alles," the derisive giggles completely died out. It immediately became a case of he who laughs first, lives to yodel.

The American forces then in training took advantage of this. They not only began to sing as they trained, but they actually began to be trained to sing. Numerous company commanders who had held strong opinions against this vocal soldiering, changed their minds and expressed the new found conviction that the day was past when singing armies could be compared solely with male coryphees who hold positions well down stage and clink empty flagons of brown October ale.

"It's a great idea," a company commander told me. "We learned it from the Blue Devils. They are the toughest set of under-sized gentry that I have run into in France. They have forearms as big as three-inch shells, and as hard. Their favourite pastime is juggling hand-grenades that can't possibly explode unless they just lightly touch one another.

"Yesterday we watched them, bared to the waist, as they went through three hours of grenade and bombing practice that was the last word in strenuosity. Keeping up with their exercises was hard work for our men, whose arms soon began to ache from the unaccustomed, overhand heaving.

"Then we watched them as their commander assembled them for the march back to the village. At the command, 'attention,' their heels clicked, their heads went back, their chins up and their right hands were pasted rigidly against their right trouser leg.

"At the command 'march' all of them started off, punctuating their first step with the first word of their marching song. It was not any sickly chorus either. There was plenty of beef and lung power behind every note. My men lined up opposite were not missing a bit of it. Most of them seemed to know what was expected when I said:

" 'On the command of "march," the company will begin to sing, keeping step with the song. The first sergeant will announce the song.'

"My first sergeant responded without a change of colour as if the command to sing had been an old regulation. I knew that he was puzzled, but he did it well. The name of the song chosen was passed down the line from man to man.

"When I gave the command to march, the company, almost half of them new recruits, wheeled in squads of fours, and started off down the road singing, 'Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here.' There were some who were kind of weak on the effort, but there was a noticeable crescendo when the sergeant passed the word down the squad that the company would be kept marching until everybody had joined in the singing.

"We swung into camp that night with every voice raising lustily on 'One Grasshopper Hopped Right Over Another Grasshopper's Back,' and after dinner the billets just sprouted melody, everything from ragtime to Christmas carols and baby lullabies."

One noticeable characteristic about our soldiers during that training period before they had come in contact with the enemy, was a total absence of violent antipathy toward all persons and things Teutonic.

On the march the men then sang "We'll Hang the Damned Old Kaiser to a Sour Apple Tree," but at that time I never heard any parodies on the "Gott Straffe Germany" theme. Our soldiers were of so many different nationalistic extractions and they had been thrown together for so short a time, that as yet no especial hatred of the enemy had developed.

An illustration of this very subject and also the manner in which our boys got along with the civilian populations of the towns they occupied came to my notice.

A driving rain which filled the valley with mist and made the hills look like mountain tops projecting above the clouds, had resulted in the abandonment of the usual daily drills. The men had spent the day in billets writing letters home, hearing indoor lectures from instructors, playing with the French children in the cottage doorways, or taking lessons in French from the peasant girls, whose eyes were inspirations to the dullest pupils.

I spent several hours in a company commander's quarters while he censored letters which the men had submitted for transmission back home. The Captain looked long at a letter in his hand, smiled and called for his orderly.

"Tell Private Blank I want to see him here right away," were the Captain's instructions. Blank's name

was not quite so German as Sourkraut, but it had a "berger" ending that was reminiscent of beer, pretzels and wooden shoes.

"Here's a letter written in German," said the Captain to me, referring to the open missive. "It's addressed to somebody by the same name as Blank, and I presume it is to some one in his family. Blank is one of the best men in my company, and I know that the letter is harmless, but it is impossible for me to pass it when written in an enemy language."

The door opened and a tall, blonde enlisted man stepped in, shaking the rain from his hat. He stood at respectful attention, saluted and said:

"Did the Captain wish to see me?"

"Yes, Blank, it is about this letter written in German," the Captain replied. "Who is it addressed to?"

"My father, in Cincinnati, sir," Blank replied.

"I am unfamiliar with German," the Captain said. "I notice the letter is brief. Is there anything in it which the company has been ordered to omit mentioning?"

"No, sir," Blank replied.

"Will you translate it for me?" the Captain asked.

"Yes, sir," said Blank, with just a bare suggestion of a blush. Then he read as follows:

"Dear Father: I am in good health. Food is good and we are learning much. I am becoming an expert grenadier. In this village where we are billeted there is a French girl named Germain. Before the war she lived in northern France, near the German frontier, and she speaks German. So it is possible for us to talk together. She fled before the German troops reached her village. She lives here now with her aunt.

"I carry water from a well for her and she has given

me each day a roll of fresh made butter for our mess. In the evening we sit on the front seat of her uncle's small carriage, which is in the front yard, and we imagine we are taking a drive, but of course there are no horses. Her uncle's horses were taken by the army a long time ago. She is very anxious to know all about America, and I have told her all about you and mother and our home in Cincinnati.

"She asked me what I am going to do after the war, and I told her that I would return to Cincinnati to help you at the store. She cried because she said she did not know where she was going after the war. Her father and two brothers have been killed and her aunt and uncle are very old.

"I have some more to write to you about Germain later. But must stop here because the Sergeants are assembling the men for indoor instruction. Love to all. It is raining very hard. Your son, ———"

Blank's face seemed to redden as he hesitated over a postscript line at the bottom of the page.

"This is nothing," he said. "I just asked father to ask mother to send me one of the photographs I had taken on the day I enlisted."

"For Germain?" the Captain enquired, smilingly.

"Yes, sir," replied Blank.

"Why didn't you write this in English?" the Captain asked.

"My father reads only German," Blank replied.

Blank was instructed to rewrite his letter in English and address it to some friend who could translate it into German for his father. As the door closed on this American soldier of German extraction, I asked the Captain, "Do you think Germain could stand for Blank's

German name, after all she has lost at the hands of the Germans?"

"She'll probably be wearing it proudly around Cincinnati within a year after the war is over," the Captain replied.

It might be reassuring at this point to remark that girls in America really have no occasion to fear that many of our soldiers will leave their hearts in France. The French women are kind to them, help them in their French lessons, and frequently feed them with home delicacies unknown to the company mess stoves, but every American soldier overseas seems to have that perfectly natural hankering to come back to the girls he left behind.

The soldier mail addressed daily to mothers and sweethearts back in the States ran far into the tons. The men were really homesick for their American women folks. I was aware of this even before I witnessed the reception given by our men to the first American nurses to reach the other side.

The hospital unit to which they belonged had been transported into that training area so quickly and so secretly that its presence there was unknown for some time. I happened to locate it by chance.

Several of us correspondents seeking a change of diet from the monotonous menu provided by the hard-working madam of our modest hostelry, motored in a new direction, over roads that opened new vistas in this picture book of the world.

Long straight avenues of towering trees whose foliage roofed the roadways were sufficient to reanimate recollections of old masters of brush realism. Ploughed fields veiled with the low-hanging mist of evening time, and distant steeples of homely simplicity faintly glazed by

the last rays of the setting sun, reproduced the tones of "The Angelus" with the over-generous hugeness of nature.

And there in that prettiest of French watering places —Vittel—we came upon those first American nurses attached to the American Expeditionary Forces. They told us that all they knew was the name of the place they were in, that they were without maps and were not even aware of what part of France they were located in.

It developed that the unit's motor transportation had not arrived and, other automobiles being as scarce as German flags, communication with the nearby camps had been almost non-existent. Orders had been received from field headquarters and acknowledged, but its relation in distance or direction to their whereabouts were shrouded in mystery. But not for long.

Soon the word spread through the training area that American nurses had a hospital in the same zone and some of the homesick Yanks began to make threats of self-mutilation in order that they might be sent to that hospital.

The hospital unit was soon followed by the arrival of numerous American auxiliary organisations and the kindly activities of the workers as well as their numbers became such as to cause the men to wonder what kind of a war they were in.

I happened to meet an old top sergeant of the regular army, a man I had known in Mexico, with the American Punitive Expedition. He had just received a large bundle of newspapers from home and he was bringing himself up-to-date on the news. I asked him what was happening back home.

"Great things are going on in the States," he said,

looking up from his papers. "Here's one story in the newspaper that says the Y. M. C. A. is sending over five hundred secretaries to tell us jokes and funny stories. And here's another account about the Red Cross donating half a million dollars to build recreation booths for us along the front. And here's a story about a New York actor getting a committee of entertainers together to come over and sing and dance for us. And down in Philadelphia they're talking about collecting a million dollars to build tabernacles along the front so's Billy Sunday can preach to us. What I'm wondering about is, when in hell they're going to send the army over."

But that was in the early fall of 1917, and as I write these lines now, in the last days of 1918, I am aware and so is the world, that in all of France nobody will ever ask that question again.

That army got there.

CHAPTER V

MAKING THE MEN WHO MAN THE GUNS

WHILE our infantry perfected their training in the Vosges, the first American artillery in France undertook a schedule of studies in an old French artillery post located near the Swiss frontier. This place is called Valdahon, and for scores of years had been one of the training places for French artillery. But during the third and fourth years of the war nearly all of the French artillery units being on the front, all subsequent drafts of French artillerymen received their training under actual war conditions.

So it was that the French war department turned over to the Americans this artillery training ground which had been long vacant. Three American artillery regiments, the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh, comprising the first U. S. Artillery Brigade, began training at this post.

The barracks had been long unoccupied and much preparatory work was necessary before our artillerymen could move in. Much of this work devolved upon the shoulders of the Brigade Quartermaster.

The first difficulty that he encountered was the matter of illumination for the barracks, mess halls and lecture rooms. All of the buildings were wired, but there was no current. The Quartermaster began an investigation and this was what he found:

The post had been supplied with electricity from a generating plant located on a river about ten miles away. This plant had supplied electrical energy for fifteen small French towns located in the vicinity. The plant

was owned and operated by a Frenchman, who was about forty years old. The French Government, realising the necessity for illumination, had exempted this man from military service, so that he remained at his plant and kept the same in operation for the benefit of the camp at Valdahon and the fifteen small towns nearby.

Then the gossips of the countryside got busy. These people began to say that Monsieur X, the operator of the plant, was not patriotic, in other words, that he was a slacker for not being at the front when all of their menfolk had been sent away to the war.

Now it so happened that Monsieur X was not a slacker, and his inclination had always been to get into the fight with the Germans, but the Government had represented to him that it was his greater duty to remain and keep his plant in operation to provide light for the countryside.

When the talk of the countryside reached Monsieur X's ears, he being a country-loving Frenchman was infuriated. He denounced the gossips as being unappreciative of the great sacrifice he had been making for their benefit, and, to make them realise it, he decided on penalising them.

Monsieur X simply closed down his plant, locked and barred the doors and windows, donned his French uniform and went away to the front to join his old regiment. That night those villagers in the fifteen nearby towns, who had been using electrical illumination, went to bed in the dark.

It required considerable research on the part of the Artillery Quartermaster to reveal all these facts. The electric lights had been unused for fifteen months when he arrived there, and he started to see what he could do to put the plant back to work. It required nothing

less finally than a special action by the French Minister of War whereby orders were received by Monsieur X commanding him to leave his regiment at the front and go back to his plant by the riverside and start making electricity again.

With the lights on and water piped in for bathing facilities, and extensive arrangements made for the instalment of stoves and other heating apparatus, the purchase of wood fuel and fodder for the animals, the Brigade moved in and occupied the camp.

The American officer in command of that post went there as a Brigadier General. As I observed him at his work in those early days, I seemed to see in his appearance and disposition some of the characteristics of a Grant. He wore a stubby-pointed beard and he clamped his teeth tight on the butt end of a cigar. I saw him frequently wearing the $11.50 regulation issue uniform of the enlisted men. I saw him frequently in rubber boots standing hip deep in the mud of the gun pits, talking to the men like a father—a kindly, yet stern father who knew how to produce discipline and results.

While at the post, he won promotion to a Major General's rank, and in less than six months he was elevated to the grade of a full General and was given the highest ranking military post in the United States. That man who trained our first artillerymen in France was General Peyton C. March, Chief of Staff of the United States Army.

Finding the right man for the right place was one of General March's hobbies. He believed in military mobilisation based on occupational qualifications. In other words, he believed that a man who had been a telephone

operator in civilian life would make a better telephone operator in the army than he would make a gunner.

I was not surpised to find that this same worthy idea had permeated in a more or less similar form down to the lowest ranks in General March's command at that time. I encountered it one cold night in October, when I was sitting in one of the barrack rooms talking with a man in the ranks.

That man's name was Budd English. I met him first in Mexico on the American Punitive Expedition, where he had driven an automobile for Damon Runyon, a fellow correspondent. English, with his quaint Southwestern wit, had become in Mexico a welcome occupant of the large pyramidal tent which housed the correspondents attached to the Expedition. We would sit for hours hearing him tell his stories of the plains and the deserts of Chihuahua.

English and I were sitting on his bed at one corner of the barrack room, rows of cots ranged each side of the wall and on these were the snoring men of the battery. The room was dimly illuminated by a candle on a shelf over English's head and another candle located on another shelf in the opposite corner of the room. There was a man in bed in a corner reading a newspaper by the feeble rays of the candle.

Suddenly we heard him growl and tear the page of the newspaper in half. His exclamation attracted my attention and I looked his way. His hair was closely cropped and his head, particularly his ears and forehead, and jaw, stamped him as a rough and ready fighter.

"That's Kid Ferguson, the pug," English whispered to me, and then in louder tones, he enquired, "What's eating on you, kid?"

"Aw, this bunk in the paper," replied Ferguson. Then

he glared at me and enquired, "Did you write this stuff?"

"What stuff?" I replied. "Read it out."

Ferguson picked up the paper and began to read in mocking tones something that went as follows:

"Isn't it beautiful in the cold early dawn in France, to see our dear American soldiers get up from their bunks and go whistling down to the stables to take care of their beloved animals."

English laughed uproariously.

"The Kid don't like horses no more than I do," he said. "Neither one of us have got any use for them at all. And here, that's all they keep us doing, is tending horses. I went down there the other morning with a lantern and one of them long-eared babies just kicked it clean out of my hand. The other morning one of them planted two hoofs right on Ferguson's chest and knocked him clear out of the stable. It broke his watch and his girl's picture.

"You know, Mr. Gibbons, I never did have any use for horses. When I was about eight years old a horse bit me. When I was about fifteen years old I got run over by an ice-wagon. Horses is just been the ruination of me.

"If it hadn't been for them I might have gone through college and been an officer in this here army. You remember that great big dairy out on the edge of the town in El Paso? Well, my dad owned that and he lost all of it on the ponies in Juarez. I just hate horses.

"I know everything there is to know about an automobile. I have driven cross country automobile races and after we come out of Mexico, after we didn't get Villa, I went to work in the army machine shops at Fort Bliss and took down all them motor trucks and built them all over again.

"When Uncle Sam got into the war against Germany, this here Artillery Battalion was stationed out at Fort Bliss, and I went to see the Major about enlisting, but I told him I didn't want to have nothing to do with no horses.

"And he says, 'English, don't you bother about that. You join up with this here battalion, because when we leave for France we're going to kiss good-bye to them horses forever. This here battalion is going to be motorised.'

"And now here we are in France, and we still got horses, and they don't like me and I don't like them, and yet I got to mill around with 'em every day. The Germans ain't never going to kill me. They ain't going to get a chance. They just going to find me trampled to death some morning down in that stable."

Two or three of the occupants of nearby beds had arisen and taken seats on English's bed. They joined the conversation. One red-headed youngster, wearing heavy flannel underwear in lieu of pajamas, made the first contribution to the discussion.

"That's just what I'm beefing about," he said. "Here I've been in this army two months now and I'm still a private. There ain't no chance here for a guy that's got experience."

"Experience? Where do you get that experience talk?" demanded English. "What do you know about artillery?"

"That's just what I mean, experience," the red-headed one replied with fire. "I got experience. Mr. Gibbons knows me. I'm from Chicago, the same as he is. I worked in Chicago at Riverview Park. I'm the guy that fired the gattling gun in the Monitor and Merrimac

show—we had two shows a day and two shows in the evening and——"

"Kin you beat that," demanded English. "You know, if this here red-headed guy don't get promotion pretty quick, he's just simply going to quit this army and leave us flat here in France facing the Germans.

"Let me tell you about this gattling gun expert. When they landed us off of them boats down on the coast, the battalion commander turned us all loose for a swim in the bay, and this here bird almost drowned. He went down three times before we could pull him out.

"Now, if they don't make him a Brigadier General pretty quick, he's going to get sore and put in for a transfer to the Navy on the grounds of having submarine experience. But he's right in one thing—experience don't count for what it should in the army.

"Right here in our battery we got a lot of plough boys from Kansas that have been sitting on a plough and looking at a horse's back all their lives, and they got them handling the machinery on these here guns. And me, who knows everything there is to know about machinery, they won't let me even find out which end of the cannon you put the shell in and which end it comes out of. All I do all day long is to prod around a couple of fat-hipped hayburners. My God, I hate horses."

But regardless of these inconveniences those first American artillerymen in our overseas forces applied themselves strenuously to their studies. They were there primarily to learn. It became necessary for them at first to make themselves forget a lot of things that they had previously learned by artillery and adapt themselves to new methods and instruments of war.

Did you ever hear of "Swansant, Kansas"? You probably won't find it on any train schedule in the Sun-

flower State; in fact, it isn't a place at all. It is the name of the light field cannon that France provided our men for use against the German line.

"Swansant, Kansas" is phonetic spelling of the name as pronounced by American gunners. The French got the same effect in pronunciation by spelling the singular "soixante quinze," but a Yankee cannoneer trying to pronounce it from that orthography was forced to call it a "quince," and that was something which it distinctly was not.

One way or the other it meant the "Seventy-fives"—the "Admirable Seventy-five"—the seventy-five millimetre field pieces that stopped the Germans' Paris drive at the Marne—the same that gave Little Willie a headache at Verdun,—the inimitable, rapid firing, target hugging, hell raising, shell spitting engine of destruction whose secret of recoil remained a secret after almost twenty years and whose dependability was a French proverb.

At Valdahon where American artillery became acquainted with the Seventy-five, the khaki-clad gun crews called her "some cannon." At seven o'clock every morning, the glass windows in my room at the post would rattle with her opening barks, and from that minute on until noon the Seventy-fives, battery upon battery of them, would snap and bark away until their seemingly ceaseless fire becomes a volley of sharp cracks which sent the echoes chasing one another through the dark recesses of the forests that conceal them.

The targets, of course, were unseen. Range elevation, deflection, all came to the battery over the signal wires that connected the firing position with some observation point also unseen but located in a position commanding the terrain under fire.

A signalman sat cross-legged on the ground back of each battery. He received the firing directions from the transmitter clamped to his ears and conveyed them to the firing executive who stood beside him. They were then megaphoned to the sergeants chief of sections.

The corporal gunner, with eye on the sighting instruments at the side of each gun, "laid the piece" for range and deflection. Number one man of the crew opened the block to receive the shell, which was inserted by number two. Number three adjusted the fuse-setter, and cut the fuses. Numbers four and five screwed the fuses in the shells and kept the fuse-setter loaded.

The section chiefs, watch in hand, gave the firing command to the gun crews, and number one of each piece jerked the firing lanyard at ten second intervals or whatever interval the command might call for. The four guns would discharge their projectiles. They whined over the damp wooded ridge to distant imaginary lines of trenches, theoretical cross-roads, or designated sections where the enemy was supposed to be massing for attack. Round after round would follow, while telephoned corrections perfected the range, and burst. The course of each shell was closely observed as well as its bursting effect, but no stupendous records were kept of the individual shots. That was "peace time stuff."

These batteries and regiments were learning gunnery and no scarcity of shells was permitted to interfere with their education. One officer told me that it was his opinion that one brigade firing at this schooling post during a course of six weeks, had expended more ammunition than all of the field artillery of the United States Army has fired during the entire period since the Civil War. The Seventy-five shells cost approximately ten dollars apiece, but neither the French nor American

artillery directors felt that a penny's worth was being wasted. They said cannon firing could not be learned entirely out of a book.

I had talked with a French instructor, a Yale graduate, who had been two years with the guns at the front, and I had asked him what in his opinion was the most disconcerting thing that could happen to effect the morale of new gunners under actual fire. I wanted some idea of what might be expected of American artillerymen when they made their initial appearance on the line.

We discussed the effect of counter battery fire, the effect on gun crews of asphyxiating gas, either that carried on the wind from the enemy trenches or that sent over in gas shells. We considered the demoralising influences of aerial attacks on gun positions behind the line.

"They are all bad," my informant concluded. "But they are expected. Men can stand without complaint and without qualm any danger that is directed at them by the foe they are fighting. The thing that really bothers, though, is the danger of death or injury from their own weapons or ammunition. You see, many times there is such a thing as a faulty shell, although careful inspection in the munitions plants has reduced this danger to a percentage of about one in ten thousand.

"At the beginning of the war when every little tin shop all over the world was converted into a munitions factory to supply the great need of shells, much faulty ammunition reached the front lines. Some of the shells would explode almost as soon as they left the gun. They are called shorts. The English, who had the same trouble, call them 'muzzle bursts.'

"Sometimes the shell would explode in the bore of the cannon, in which case the cannoneers were usually killed either by pieces of the shell itself or bits of the cannon.

The gunners have to sit beside the cannon when it is fired, and the rest of the gun crew are all within eight feet of it. If there is an explosion in the breech of the gun, it usually wipes out most of the crew. A muzzle burst, or a breech explosion, is one of the most disconcerting things that could happen in a battery.

"The other men in the battery know of course that a faulty shell caused the explosion. They also know that they are firing ammunition from the same lot. After that, as they pull the trigger on each shot, they don't know whether the shell is going out of the gun all right or whether it is going to explode in the breech and kill all of them. That thought in a man's mind when he pulls the firing lanyard, that thought in the minds of the whole crew as they stand there waiting for the crash, is positively demoralising.

"When it happens in our French artillery the cannoneers lose confidence in their pieces. They build small individual dugouts a safe ways back from the gun and extend the lanyard a safe distance. Then, with all the gun crew under cover, they fire the piece. This naturally removes them from their regular firing positions beside the pieces, reduces the accuracy and slows up the entire action of the battery. The men's suspicions of the shells combined with the fear of death by their own weapons, which is greater than any fear of death at the hands of the enemy, all reduce the morale of the gun crews."

Now, for an incident. A new shipment of ammunition had reached the post. The caissons were filled with it. Early the following morning when the guns rumbled out of camp to the practice grounds, Battery X was firing in the open. At the third shot the shell from piece number two exploded prematurely thirty yards from the muzzle. Pieces three and four fired ten and twenty seconds

later with every man standing on his toes in his prescribed position.

Ten rounds later, a shell from number three gun exploded thirty feet after leaving the bore. Shell particles buried themselves in the ground near the battery. Piece number four, right next to it, was due to fire in ten seconds. It discharged its projectiles on the dot. The gun crews knew what they were up against. They were firing faulty ammunition. They passed whispered remarks but reloaded with more of the same ammunition and with military precision on the immediate command. Every man stuck to his position. As each gun was fired the immediate possibilities were not difficult to imagine.

Then it happened.

"Commence firing," megaphoned the firing executive. The section chief of number one piece dropped his right hand as the signal for the dicharge. The corporal gunner was sitting on the metal seat in front of his instruments and not ten inches to the left of the breech. Cannoneer number one of the gun crew occupied his prescribed position in the same location to the immediate right of the breech. Gunner number two was standing six feet behind the breech and slightly to the left ready to receive the ejected cartridge case. Gunner number three was kneeling over the fuse setter behind the caisson which stood wheel to wheel with the gun carriage. Gunners four and five were rigid statues three feet back of him. Every man in the crew had seen the previous bursts of dangerous ammunition.

Number one's eye caught the descending hand of the section chief. He pulled the lanyard.

There was an eruption of orange coloured flame, a deafening roar, a crash of rendered steel, a cloud of smoke blue green, and yellow.

A black chunk of the gun cradle hurtled backward through the air with a vicious swish. A piece of the bore splintered the wheels and buried itself in the ammunition caisson. Thick hunks of gun metal crumbling like dry cake filled the air. The ground shook.

The corporal gunner pitched backward from his seat and collapsed on the ground. His mate with fists buried in his steel seared eyes staggered out of the choking fumes. The rest of the crew picked themselves up in a dazed condition. Fifty yards away a horse was struggling to regain his feet.

Every man in the three other gun crews knew what had happened. None of them moved from their posts. They knew their guns were loaded with shells from the same lot and possibly with the same faults. No man knew what would happen when the next firing pin went home. The evidence was before them. Their eyes were on the exploded gun but not for long.

"Crash," the ten second firing interval had expired. The section chief of piece number two had dropped his hand. The second gun in the battery had fired.

"Number two on the way," sang out the signalman over the telephone wire to the hidden observation station.

Ten seconds more for another gun crew to cogitate on whether disaster hung on the dart of a firing pin.

"Crash."

"Number three on the way."

Another ten seconds for the last section to wonder whether death would come with the lanyard jerk.

"Crash."

"Number four on the way." Round complete. The signalman finished his telephone report.

Four horses drawing an army ambulance galloped up from the ravine that sheltered them. The corporal gun-

ner, unconscious and with one leg pulverised was lifted in. Two other dazed members of the crew were helped into the vehicle. One was bleeding from the shoulder. The lead horses swung about; the ambulance rattled away.

"Battery ready to fire. Piece number one out of action." It was the signalman reporting over the wire to the observer.

Battery X fired the rest of the morning and they used ammunition from the same lot and every man knew what might happen any minute and every man was in his exact position for every shot and nobody happened to think about hiding in a dugout and putting a long string on the firing lanyard.

It had been an unstaged, unconscious demonstration of nerve and grit and it proved beyond all question the capacity of American artillerymen to stand by the guns.

The gunner corporal told the nurse at his bedside how it all happened, but he was still under the effects of the anesthetic. He did not refer to the morale of his battery mates because it had not occurred to him that there was anything unusual in what they did. But he did think that he could wiggle the toes on his right leg. The doctor told me that this was a common delusion before the patient had been informed of the amputation.

Incidents such as the one related had no effect whatever upon the progress of the work. From early dawn to late at night the men followed their strenuous duties six days a week and then obtained the necessary relief on the seventh day by trips down to the ancient town of Besançon.

In this picturesque country where countless thousands fought and died, down through the bloody centuries since and before the Christian era, where Julius Cæsar paused

in his far flung raids to dictate new inserts to his commentaries, where kings and queens and dukes and pretenders left undying traces of ambition's stormy urgings, there it was that American soldiers, in training for the war of wars, spent week-end holidays and mixed the breath of romance with the drag of their cigarettes.

The extender of Roman borders divided that region into three parts, according to the testimony of the first Latin class, but he neglected to mention that of these three parts the one decreed for American occupation was the most romantic of them all.

It is late on a Saturday afternoon and I accept the major's offer of a seat in his mud-bespattered "Hunka Tin." The field guns have ceased their roar for the day and their bores will be allowed to cool over Sunday. Five per cent. of the men at the post have received the coveted town leave.

They form a khaki fresco on the cab and sides of the giant commissary trucks that raise the dust along the winding white road over the hills. Snorting motorcycles with two men over the motor and an officer in the side car skim over the ground, passing all others. A lukewarm sun disappears in a slot in the mountains and a blue grey mist forms in the valleys. A chill comes over the air and a cold new moon looks down and laughs.

It is a long ride to the ancient town, but speed laws and motor traps are unknown and the hood of the Detroit Dilemma shakes like a wet dog as her sizzling hot cylinders suck juice from a full throttle. We cross one divide through a winding road bordered by bushy trees and as orderly as a national park. We coast through a hillside hamlet of barking dogs and saluting children

who stand at smiling attention and greet our passage with a shrill "Veev La Mereek" (Vive l'Amérique).

We scud across a broad, level road built well above the lowland, and climb through zigzagging avenues of stately poplars to the tunnel that pierces the backbone of the next ridge.

While the solid rock walls of the black bore reverberate with the echoes from our exhaust, we emerge on a road that turns sharply to the left and hugs a cliff. Below winds a broad river that looks like mother of pearl in the moonlight. The mountain walls on either side rise at angles approximating 45 degrees, and in the light their orderly vineyards look like the squares on a sloping checkerboard. In front of us and to the right the flanking ridges converge to a narrow gorge through which the river Doub runs to loop the town.

Commanding this gorge from the crests of the two rocky heights are sinister sentinels whose smooth, grey walls and towers rise sheer from the brink of the cliffs. The moonlight now catching the ramparts of the embattlements splashes them with strokes of white that seem ever brighter in contrast with the darker shadows made by projecting portions of the walls. Spaniard and Moor knew well those walls, and all the kingly glory that hurried France to the reign of terror has slept within their shadows.

Our way down the cliff side is hewn out of the beetling rock. To our left, a jagged wall of rock rises to the sky. To our right, a step, rock-tumbled declivity drops to the river's edge.

The moonlight brings funny fancies, and our yellow headlights, wavering in concentric arcs with each turn of the course, almost seem to glint on the helmets and shields of the spear-bearing legionaries that marched that

very way to force a southern culture on the Gauls. We slow down to pass through the rock-hewn gate that once was the Roman aqueduct bringing water down from mountain springs to the town.

Through the gate, a turn to the left and we reach the black bottom of the gorge untouched by the rising moon. We face a blast of wind that slows our speed and brings with it the first big drops of rain. We stop at the "Octroi" and assure the customs collector that we are military, and that we carry no dutiable wine, or beans or wood into the town.

Yet another gate, built across the narrow road between the cliff and the river, and we enter the town. It has been raining and the cobblestones are slippery. They shine in the gleams of pale light that come from the top-heavy street lamps. Gargoyle water spouts drip drainage from the gables of moss-speckled tiles.

We pass a fountain that the Romans left, and rounded arches further on show where the hooded Moor wrote his name in masonry. Barred windows and stone balconies projecting over the street take one's mind off the rattling motor and cause it to wander back to times when serenading lovers twanged guitars beneath their ladies' windows and were satisfied with the flower that dropped from the balcony.

The streets are wet and dark now and through their narrow windings our headlights reveal tall figures in slickers or khaki overcoats topped by peaked felt hats with the red cords of American artillerymen. Their identification is a surprise to the dreamer, because one rather expects these figures to sulk in the deeper shadows and screen their dark, bearded faces with the broad brims of black felt hats or muffle themselves to the chin in

long, flowing black cloaks that hide rapiers and stilettos and other properties of mediæval charm.

We dine in a room three hundred years old. The presence of our automobile within the inner quadrangle of the ancient building jars on the sense of fitness. It is an old convent, now occupied by irreligious tenants on the upper three floors, restaurants and estaminets on the lower floor. These shops open on a broad gallery, level with the courtyard, and separated from it only by the rows of pillars that support the arches. It extends around the four sides of the court.

Centuries ago shrouded nuns, clasping beads or books of office, walked in uncommunicative pairs and mumbled their daily prayers beneath these time-worn arches, and to-night it affords a promenade for officers waiting for their meals to be served at madame's well laid tables within.

Madame's tables are not too many. There is not the space economy of an American café, where elbows interlock and waiters are forced to navigate fearsome cargoes above the diners' heads. Neither is there the unwholesome, dust-filled carpet of London's roast beef palaces.

Madame's floor is bare, but the wood has stood the scrubbings of years, and is as spotless as grass-dried linen. The high ceiling and the walls are of white stucco. In bas-relief are clusters of heraldic signs, of bishops' crooks and cathedral keys, of mounted chargers and dying dragoons, of miter and crown, and trumpet and shield, and cross.

Large mirrors, circled with wreaths of gilded leaves, adorn both end walls, and beneath one of them remains an ornate fireplace and mantelpiece of bologna coloured marble, surmounted with a gilt cock of wondrous design. Beneath the other mirror madame has placed

her buffet, on which the boy who explores the dusty caves below places the cobwebbed bottles of red wine for the last cork pulling. Large gold chandeliers, dangling with glass prisms, are suspended from high ceiling and flood the room with light, against which the inner shutters of the tall windows must be shut because of danger from the sky.

There is colour in that room. The Roman conquerors would have found it interesting. If former armed occupants of the old town could have paraded in their ancient habiliments through the room like a procession from the martial past, they would have found much for their attention in this scene of the martial present. American khaki seems to predominate, although at several tables are Canadian officers in uniforms of the same colour but of different tailoring.

The tables are flecked with all varieties of French uniforms, from scarlet pants with solitary black stripes down the leg, to tunics of horizon blue. In one corner there are two turbaned Algerians with heads bent close over their black coffee, and one horn of the hall rack shows a red fez with a gold crescent on the crown.

Consider the company. That freckle-faced youth with the fluffed reddish hair of a bandmaster is a French aviator, and among the row of decorations on his dark blue coat is one that he received by reason of a well known adventure over the German lines, which cannot be mentioned here. That American colonel whose short grey hair blends into the white wall behind him is a former member of the United States war college and one of the most important factors in the legislation that shaped the present military status of his country. That other Frenchman with the unusual gold shoulder straps is not a member of the French army. He is a

naval officer, and the daring with which he carried his mapping chart along exposed portions of the line at Verdun and evolved the mathematical data on which the French fired their guns against the German waves has been the pride of both the navy and the army.

Over there is a young captain who this time last year was a "shavetail" second in command at a small post along the line of communications in Chihuahua. Next to him sits a tall dark youngster wearing with pride his first Sam Browne belt and "U. S. R." on his collar. He carted human wreckage to the hospitals on the French front for two years before Uncle Sam decided to end the war. There's another one not long from the "Point," booted and spurred and moulded to his uniform. He speaks with a twang of old Virginia on every syllable and they say his family—but that has nothing to do with the fact that he is aid to a major general and is in these parts on a mission.

There are three American women in the room. One who is interested in Y. M. C. A. work and a number of newspapers, wears a feminine adaptation of the uniform and holds court at the head of a table of five officers. Another, Mrs. Robert R. McCormick, who is engaged in the extension of the canteen work of a Paris organisation, is sitting at our table and she is willing to wager her husband anything from half a dozen gloves to a big donation check that Germany will be ready for any kind of peace before an American offensive in the spring.

The interests of the other American woman are negative. She professes no concern in the fact that war correspondents' life insurances are cancelled, but she repeats to me that a dead correspondent is of no use to his paper, and I reply that if madame puts yet another one of her

courses on the board, one correspondent will die with a fork in his hand instead of a pencil.

The diners are leaving. Each opening of the salon door brings in a gust of dampness that makes the table-cloths flap. Rain coats swish and rustle in the entry. Rain is falling in sheets in the black courtyard. The moon is gone.

A merry party trails down the stone gallery skirting the quadrangle. Their hobnailed soles and steel plated heels ring on the stone flags. The arches echo back their song:

"In days of old
A warrior bold
Sang merrily his lay, etc. etc. etc.
My love is young and fair.
My love has golden hair,
So what care I
Though death be nigh, etc. etc. etc.

With frequent passages where a dearth of words reduce the selection to musical but meaningless ta-de-ta-tas, the voices melt into the blackness and the rain.

"Great times to be alive," I say to the wife. "This place is saturated with romance. I don't have to be back to the post until to-morrow night. Where will we go? They are singing 'Carmen' in the old opera house on the square. What do you say?"

"There's a Charlie Chaplin on the programme next to the hotel," the wife replies.

Romance was slapped with a custard pie.

CHAPTER VI

"FRONTWARD HO!"

When the artillery training had proceeded to such a point that the French instructors were congratulating our officers upon their proficiency, the rumours spread through the post that the brigade had been ordered to go to the front—that we were to be the first American soldiers to actually go into the line and face the Germans.

The news was received with joy. The men were keen to try out their newly acquired abilities upon the enemy. Harness was polished until it shone. Brass equipment gleamed until you could almost see your face in it. The men groomed the horses until the animals got pains from it. Enlisted men sojourning in the Guard House for petty offences, despatched their guards with scrawled pleadings that the sentences be changed to fines so that they could accompany the outfits to the front.

With one special purpose in view, I made application to General March for an assignment to Battery A of the Sixth Field Artillery. I received the appointment. The Sixth was the first regiment of the brigade and A was the first battery of the regiment. I knew that we would march out in that order, that Battery A would entrain first, detrain first, go in the line first, and I hoped to be present at the firing of the first American shot in the war.

We pulled out of the post on schedule time early in the morning, two days later. Officers and men had been up and dressed since midnight. Ten minutes after their arising, blankets had been rolled and all personal

equipment packed ready for departure with the exception of mess kits.

While the stable police details fed the horses, the rest of us "leaned up against" steak, hot biscuits, syrup and hot coffee. The cook had been on the job all night and his efforts touched the right spot. It seemed as if it was the coldest hour of the night and the hot "chow" acted as a primer on the sleepy human machines.

In the darkness, the animals were packed into the gun carriages and caissons down in the gun park, and it was 4 A. M. on the dot when the captain's whistle sounded and we moved off the reserve. As we rattled over the railroad crossing and took the road, the men made facetious good-byes to the scene of their six weeks' training.

Soldiers like movement—we were on the move. Every one's spirits were up and the animals were frisky and high-stepping in the brisk air. Chains rattled as some of the lead pairs mussed up the traces and were brought back into alignment by the drivers. The cannoneers, muffled in great coats, hung on the caisson seats and chided the drivers.

We were off. Where we were going, seemed to make no difference. Rumours could never be depended upon, so none of us knew our destination, but all of us hoped that we were going into action. Every man in the battery felt that the schooling was over and that the battery, if given a chance, could prove that it needed no further training.

At the same time, some of the men expressed the fear that we were on our way to some other training camp for some post-graduate course in firing or maybe for the purpose of instructing other less advanced batteries. The final consensus of opinion was, however, that "beef-

ing" about our prospects wouldn't change them, and that anything was better than staying in the same place forever.

Two miles from the post the road crossed the railroad tracks. The crossing bore a name as everything else did in that land of poetical nomenclature. There was only one house there. It was an old grey stone cottage, its walls covered with vines, and its garden full of shrubbery. It was occupied by three persons, the old crossing-tender, his wife—and one other. That other was Jeanne. Jeanne was their daughter.

We had seen her many times as she opened the crossing gates for traffic on the road. She was about sixteen years old. Her ankles were encased in thick grey woollen hose of her own knitting and, where they emerged from her heavy wooden shoes, it looked as if every move in her clumsy footgear might break them off.

As we approached the crossing, Gallagher, who rode one of the lead pair on piece No. 2, began to give vent to his fine Irish tenor. Gallagher was singing:

"We were sailing along
On Moonlight bay,
You could hear the voices ringing,
They seemed to say,
'You have stolen my heart
Now, don't go away,'
As we kissed and said good-bye
On Moonlight bay."

It would almost have seemed that there was need of some explanation for Gallagher's musical demonstration on this cold, dark morning, but none was demanded. Gallagher apparently knew what he was doing.

His pair of lead horses were walking in much too orderly a fashion for the occasion. Apparently the occasion demanded a little greater show of dash and spirit. Gallagher sunk his spurs into the flanks of his mount and punched its mate in the ribs with the heavy handle of his riding crop.

The leads lunged forward against their collars. The sudden plunge was accompanied by a jangle of chains as the traces tightened. The gun carriage jolted and the cannoneers swore at the unnecessary bouncing.

"Easy, Zigg-Zigg, whoa, Fini." Gallagher pulled on the lines as he shouted in a calculated pitch the French names of his horses. And then the reason for Gallagher's conduct developed.

A pair of wooden shutters on a first floor window of the gate-tender's cottage opened outward. In the window was a lamp. The yellow rays from it shone upward and revealed a tumbled mass of long black hair, black eyes that gleamed, red cheeks and red lips. Then a sweet voice said:

"Gude-bye, Meeky."

"Orry wore, Jeen," replied Gallagher.

"*Après la guerre,* Meeky," said Jeanne.

"Orry wore, Jeen," repeated Gallagher.

"Oh, Jeanie, dear, please call me 'Meeky,' " sang out one of the men, astride one of the wheel pair of the same gun.

The window had closed, but before the light disappeared, black eyes flashed hate at the jester, and Gallagher, himself, two horses ahead, turned in the saddle and told the taunter to shut his mouth, observing at the same time that "some guys didn't know a decent girl when they saw one."

We rode on. Soon, on the left, the sun came up cold

out of Switzerland's white topped ridges miles away, and smiling frigidly across the snow-clad neutral Alps, dispelled the night mist in our part of the world.

The battery warmed under its glow. Village after village we passed through, returning the polite salutes of early rising grand-sires who uncovered their grey heads, or wrinkled, pink-faced grandmothers, who waved kerchiefs from gabled windows beneath the thatch and smiled the straight and dry-lipped smile of toothless age as they wished us good fortune in the war.

We messed at midday by the roadside, green fields and hills of France, our table decorations, cold beef and dry bread, our fare, with canteens full to wash it down. When the horses had tossed their nose-bags futilely for the last grains of oats, and the captain's watch had timed the rest at three-quarters of the hour, we mounted and resumed the march.

The equipment rode easy on man and beast. Packs had been shifted to positions of maximum comfort. The horses were still fresh enough to need tight rein. The men had made final adjustments to the chin straps on their new steel helmets and these sat well on heads that never before had been topped with armoured covering. In addition to all other equipment, each man carried two gas masks. Our top sergeant had an explanation for me as to this double gas mask equipment.

"I'll tell you about it," he said, as he ruthlessly accepted the next-to-the-last twenty-five centime Egyptian cigarette from my proffered case. I winced as he deliberately tore the paper from that precious fine smoke and inserted the filler in his mouth for a chew.

"You see, England and France and us is all Allies," he said. "Both of them loves us and we love both of them. We don't know nothing about gas masks and

they knows all there is to know about them. The French say their gas mask is the best. The British say their gas mask is the best.

"Well, you see, they both offer us gas masks. Now Uncle Sam don't want to hurt nobody's feelings, so he says, 'Gentlemen, we won't fight about this here matter. We'll just use both gas masks, and give each of them a try-out.'

"So here we are carrying two of these human nose-bags. The first time we get into a mess of this here gas, somebody will send the order around to change masks in the middle of it—just to find out which is the best one."

The sergeant, with seeming malice, spat some of that fine cigarette on a roadside kilometer stone and closed the international prospects of the subject.

Our battery jangled through a tunnelled ridge and emerged on the other side just as a storm of rain and hail burst with mountain fury. The hailstones rattled on our metal helmets and the men laughed at the sound as they donned slickers. The brakes grated on the caisson wheels as we took the steep down-grade. The road hugged the valley wall which was a rugged, granite cliff.

I rode on ahead through the stinging hailstones and watched our battery as it passed through the historic rock-hewn gateway that is the entrance to the mediæval town of Besançon. The portal is located at a sharp turn of the river. The gateway is carved through a mountain spur. Ancient doors of iron-studded oak still guard the entrance, but they have long since stood open. Battlements that once knew the hand of Vaubon frown down in ancient menace to any invader.

No Roman conqueror at the head of his invading legions ever rode through that triumphal arch with

CAPT. CHEVALIER, OF THE FRENCH ARMY, INSTRUCTING AMERICAN OFFICERS IN THE USE OF THE ONE-POUNDER

IN THE COURSE OF ITS PROGRESS TO THE VALLEY OF THE VESLE THIS 155 MM. GUN AND OTHERS OF ITS KIND WERE EDUCATING THE BOCHE TO RESPECT AMERICA. THE TRACTOR HAULS IT ALONG STEADILY AND SLOWLY, LIKE A STEAM ROLLER

greater pride than rode our little captain at the head of his battery. Our little captain was in stature the smallest man in our battery, but he compensated for that by riding the tallest horse in the battery.

He carried his head at a jaunty angle. He wore his helmet at a nifty tilt, with the chin strap riding between his underlip and his dimpled, upheld chin. He carried his shoulders back, and his chest out. The reins hung gracefully in his left hand, and he had assumed a rather moving-picture pose of the right fist on his right hip. Behind him flew the red guidon, its stirruped staff held stiffly at the right arm's length by the battery standard bearer.

Both of them smiled—expansive smiles of pride—into the clicking lens of my camera. I forgave our little captain for his smile of pride. I knew that six weeks before that very day our little captain had fitted into the scheme of civilian life as a machinery salesman from Indiana. And there that day, he rode at the head of his two hundred and fifty fighting men and horses, at the head of his guns, rolling down that road in France on the way to the front.

In back of him and towering upward, was that historic rock that had known the tread and passage of countless martial footsteps down through the centuries. Behind him, the gun carriages rattled through the frowning portal. Oh, if the folks back on the Wabash could have seen him then!

We wound through the crooked narrow streets of Besançon, our steel-tired wheels bounding and banging over the cobblestones. Townsfolk waved to us from windows and doorways. Old women in the market square abandoned their baskets of beet roots and beans to flutter green stained aprons in our direction. Our

column was flanked by clattering phalanxes of wooden-shoed street gamins, who must have known more about our movements than we did, because they all shouted, "Gude-bye."

Six weeks' familiarity between these same artillerymen on town leave and these same urchins had temporised the blind admiration that caused them first to greet our men solely with shouts of *"Vive les Américains."* Now that they knew us better, they alternated the old greeting with shouts of that all-meaning and also meaningless French expression, "Oo la la."

Our way led over the stone, spanned bridge that crossed the sluggish river through the town, and on to the hilly outskirts where mounted French guides met and directed us to the railroad loading platform.

The platform was a busy place. The regimental supply company which was preceding us over the road was engaged in forcibly persuading the last of its mules to enter the toy freight cars which bore on the side the printed legend, "Hommes 40, Chevaux 8."

Several arclights and one or two acetylene flares illuminated the scene. It was raining fitfully, but not enough to dampen the spirits of the Y. M. C. A. workers who wrestled with canvas tarpaulins and foraged materials to construct a make-shift shelter for a free coffee and sandwich counter.

Their stoves were burning brightly and the hurriedly erected stove pipes, leaning wearily against the stone wall enclosing the quay, topped the wall like a miniature of the sky line of Pittsburgh. The boiling coffee pots gave off a delicious steam. In the language of our battery, the "Whime say" delivered the goods.

During it all the mules brayed and the supply company men swore. Most humans, cognizant of the prin-

ciples of safety first, are respectful of the rear quarters of a mule. We watched one disrespecter of these principles invite what might have been called "mulecide" with utter contempt for the consequences. He deliberately stood in the dangerous immediate rear of one particularly onery mule, and kicked the mule.

His name was "Missouri Slim," as he took pains to inform the object of his caress. He further announced to all present, men and mules, that he had been brought up with mules from babyhood and knew mules from the tips of their long ears to the ends of their hard tails.

The obdurate animal in question had refused to enter the door of the car that had been indicated as his Pullman. "Missouri Slim" called three other ex-natives of Champ Clark's state to his assistance. They fearlessly put a shoulder under each of the mule's quarters. Then they grunted a unanimous "heave," and lifted the struggling animal off its feet. As a perfect matter of course, they walked right into the car with him with no more trouble than if he had been an extra large bale of hay.

"Wonderful mule handling in this here army," remarked a quiet, mild-mannered man in uniform, beside whom I happened to be standing. He spoke with a slow, almost sleepy, drawl. He was the new veterinarian of the supply company, and there were a number of things that were new to him, as his story revealed. He was the first homesick horse doctor I ever met.

"I come from a small town out in Iowa," he told me. "I went to a veterinary college and had a nice little practice,—sorter kept myself so busy that I never got much of a chance to think about this here war. But one day, about two months ago, I got a letter from the War Department down in Washington.

"They said the hoss doctor college had given them

my name as one of the graduates and the letter said that the War Department was making out a list of hoss doctors. The letter asked me to fill out the blank and send it to Washington.

" 'Joe,' my wife says to me, 'this here is an honour that the country is paying to you. The Government just wants the names of the patriotic professional citizens of the country.' So we filled out the blank and mailed it and forgot all about it.

"Well, about two weeks later, I got a letter from Washington telling me to go at once to Douglas, Arizona. It sorter scared the wife and me at first because neither of us had ever been out of Iowa, but I told her that I was sure it wasn't anything serious—I thought that Uncle Sam just had some sick hosses down there and wanted me to go down and look them over.

"Well, the wife put another shirt and a collar and an extra pair of socks in my hand satchel along with my instruments and I kissed her and the little boy good-bye and told them that I would hurry up and prescribe for the Government hosses and be back in about five days.

"Two days later I landed in Douglas, and a major shoved me into a uniform and told me I was commissioned as a hoss doctor lieutenant. That afternoon I was put on a train with a battery and we were on our way east. Six days later we were on the ocean. We landed somewhere in France and moved way out here.

"My wife was expecting me back in five days and here it is I've been away two months and I haven't had a letter from her and now we're moving up to the front. It seems to me like I've been away from Iowa for ten years, and I guess I am a little homesick, but it sure is

a comfort to travel with an outfit that knows how to handle mules like this one does."

The supply company completed loading, and the homesick horse doctor boarded the last car as the train moved down the track. Our battery took possession of the platform. A train of empties was shunted into position and we began loading guns and wagons on the flat cars and putting the animals into the box cars.

Considerable confusion accompanied this operation. The horses seemed to have decided scruples against entering the cars. It was dark and the rain came down miserably. The men swore. There was considerable kicking on the part of the men as well as the animals.

I noticed one group that was gathered around a plunging team of horses. The group represented an entanglement of rope, harness, horses and men. I heard a clang of metal and saw the flash of two steel-shod hoofs. A little corporal, holding his head up with both hands, backed out of the group,—backed clear across the platform and sat down on a bale of hay.

I went to his assistance. Blood was trickling through his fingers. I washed his two scalp wounds with water from a canteen and applied first aid bandages.

"Just my luck," I heard my patient mumbling as I swathed his head in white strips and imparted to him the appearance of a first-class front line casualty.

"You're lucky," I told him truthfully. "Not many men get kicked in the head by a horse and escape without a fractured skull."

"That isn't it," he said; "you see for the last week I've been wearing that steel helmet—that cast-iron sombrero that weighs so much it almost breaks your neck, and two minutes before that long-legged baby kicked me, the tin hat fell off my head."

By the time our battery had been loaded, another battery was waiting to move on to the platform. Our captain went down the length of the train examining the halter straps in the horse cars and assuring himself of the correct apportionment of men in each car. Then we moved out on what developed to be a wild night ride.

The horse has been described as man's friend and no one questions that a horse and a man, if placed out in any large open space, are capable of getting along to their mutual comfort. But when army regulations and the requirements of military transportation place eight horses and four men in the same toy French box car and then pat all twelve of them figuratively on the neck and tell them to lie down together and sleep through an indefinite night's ride, it is not only probable, but it is certain, that the legendary comradeship of the man and the horse ceases. The described condition does not encompass the best understood relation of the two as travelling companions.

On our military trains in France, the reservations of space for the human and dumb occupants of the same car were something as follows: Four horses occupied the forward half of the car. Four more horses occupied the rear half of the car. Four men occupied the remaining space. The eight four-footed animals are packed in lengthwise with their heads towards the central space between the two side doors. The central space is reserved for the four two-footed animals.

Then the train moves. If the movement is forward and sudden, as it usually is, the four horses in the forward end of the car involuntarily obey the rules of inertia and slide into the central space. If the movement of the train is backward and equally sudden, the four horses in the rear end of the car obey the same rule

and plunge forward into the central space. On the whole, night life for the men in the straw on the floor of the central space is a lively existence, while "riding the rattlers with a horse outfit."

Our battery found it so. I rode a number of miles that night sitting with four artillerymen in the central space between the side doors which had been closed upon orders. From the roof of the car, immediately above our heads, an oil lantern swung and swayed with every jolt of the wheels and cast a feeble light down upon our conference in the straw. We occupied a small square area which we had attempted to particularise by roping it off.

On either side were the blank surfaces of the closed doors. To either end were the heads of four nervous animals, eight ponderous hulks of steel-shod horseflesh, high strung and fidgety, verging almost on panic under the unusual conditions they were enduring, and subject at any minute to new fits of excitement.

We sat at their feet as we rattled along. I recalled the scene of the loose cannon plunging about the crowded deck of a rolling vessel at sea and related Hugo's thrilling description to my companions.

"Yeah," observed Shoemaker, driver of the "wheelers" on No. 4 piece, "Yeah, but there ain't no mast to climb up on and get out of the way on in this here boxcar."

"I'd rather take my chances with a cannon any day," said 'Beady' Watson, gunner. "A cannon will stay put when you fix it. There's our piece out on the flat car and she's all lashed and blocked. It would take a wreck to budge her off that flat. I wish the B. C. had let me ride with the old gun out there. It would be a little colder but a lot healthier. Try to go to sleep in here and you'll wake up with a horse sitting on you."

"Where do you suppose we are going anyway?" asked Slater, fuse cutter in the same section. "I'm strong for travel, but I always like to read the program before we start to ramble. For all we know we might be on our way to Switzerland or Italy or Spain or Egypt or somewhere."

"Why don't you go up and ask the Captain?" suggested Boyle, corporal in charge of the car. "Maybe the Colonel gave him a special message to deliver to you about our dusty-nation. You needn't worry though. They ain't going to bowl us out of France for some time yet."

"Well, if we're just joy-riding around France," replied Slater, "I hope we stop over to feed the horses at Monte Carlo. I've heard a lot about that joint. They say that they run the biggest crap game in the world there, and the police lay off the place because the Governor of the State or the King or something, banks the game. They tell me he uses straight bones and I figure a man could clean up big if he hit the game on a payday."

"Listen, kid, you've got this tip wrong," said Shoemaker. "If there's anything happens to start a riot among these horses, you are going to find that you're gambling with death. And if we ever get off this train, I think we have a date with Kaiser Bill."

"I've got a cousin somewhere in the German army. He spells his 'Shoemaker' with a 'u.' My dad told me that my grandfather and this cousin's grandfather had a business disagreement over a sauerkraut factory some time before the Civil War and my grandfather left Germany. Since then, there ain't been no love lost between the branches of the family, but we did hear

that Cousin Hans had left the sauerkraut business and was packing a howitzer for the Kaiser."

"Well, I hope we come across him for your sake," said Watson. "It's kinda tough luck to get cheated out of a big business like that, but then you must remember that if your cousin's grandfather hadn't pulled the dirty on your grandfather, your grandfather might never have gone to America and most likely you'd still be a German."

"I guess there's some sense in that, too," replied Shoemaker; "wouldn't that been hell if I'd been on the other side in this war? But anyhow, I do hope we run into Cousin Hans somewhere."

The horses had been comparatively quiet for some time, but now they seemed to be growing restless. They pricked their ears and we knew something was bothering them. The discussion stopped so that we could listen better.

Above the rattle of the train, there came to us the sound of firing. It seemed to come from the direction in which we were going. With surprising quickness, the explosions grew louder. We were not only speeding toward the sounds of conflict, but the conflict itself seemed to be speeding toward us.

Then came a crash unmistakably near. One of the horses in the forward end reared, and his head thumped the roof of the car. Once again on four feet, he pranced nervously and tossed his blood-wet forelock. Immediately the other horses began stamping.

Another crash!—this time almost directly overhead. In the light of the swinging lantern, I could see the terror in the eyes of the frightened brutes. We clung to their halters and tried to quiet them but they lifted us off our feet.

"Put a twitch on that one's nose and hold him down," Boyle ordered.

"Gosh," said Slater, obeying, "we must be right up on the front line. Hope they don't stop this train in No Man's Land. Hold still, you crazy b——"

"Cousin Hans must have heard you talking," Watson shouted to Shoemaker. "Maybe you're going to see him quicker than you expected."

The train was slowing down. The brakes shrieked and grated as we came to a jerky stop. Three of us braced ourselves at the heads of the four horses in the rear of the car and prevented them from sliding on top of us. Boyle and Slater were doing their best to quiet the forward four. The explosions overhead increased. Now we heard the report of field pieces so close that they seemed to be almost alongside the track.

There came a sharp bang at one of the side doors, and I thought I recognised the sound of the lead-loaded handle of the captain's riding whip. His voice, coming to us a minute later above the trampling and kicking of the panic-stricken animals, verified my belief.

"Darken that lantern," he shouted. "Keep all lights out and keep your helmets on. Stay in the cars and hang on to the horses. There is an air raid on right above us."

"Yes, sir," replied Boyle, and we heard the captain run to the next car. I blew out the light and we were in complete darkness, with eight tossing, plunging horses that kicked and reared at every crash of the guns nearby or burst of the shells overhead.

We hung on while the air battle went on above. One horse went down on his knees and in his frantic struggles to regain his feet, almost kicked the feet from under the animal beside him.

At times, thunderous detonations told us that aerial bombs were doing their work near at hand. We supposed correctly that we were near some town not far behind the lines, and that the German was paying it a night visit with some of his heaviest visiting cards.

I opened one side door just a crack and looked out. The darkness above blossomed with blinding blotches of fire that flashed on and off. It seemed as though the sky were a canopy of black velvet perforated with hundreds of holes behind which dazzling lights passed back and forth, flashing momentary gleams of brilliance through the punctures. Again, this vision would pass as a luminous dripping mass would poise itself on high and cast a steady white glare that revealed clusters of grey smoke puffs of exploded shrapnel.

We had to close the door because the flashes added to the terror of the horses, but the aerial activity passed almost as suddenly as it had come and left our train untouched. As the raiding planes went down the wind, followed always by the poppings of the anti-aircraft guns, the sound of the conflict grew distant. We got control over the horses although they still trembled with fright.

There came another rap at the door and I hurriedly accepted the captain's invitation to accompany him forward to a first-class coach where I spent the remainder of the night stretched out on the cushions. As our train resumed its way into the darkness, I dreamed of racing before a stampede of wild horses.

CHAPTER VII

INTO THE LINE—THE FIRST AMERICAN SHOT IN THE WAR

A DAMP, chill, morning mist made the dawn even greyer as our battery train slid into a loading platform almost under the walls of a large manufacturing plant engaged in producing war materials.

In spite of the fact that the section chiefs reported that not a man had been injured, and not so much as a leg broken in the crowded horse cars, every man in the battery now declared the absence of any doubt but the air raid had been directly aimed at Battery A.

"There might be a spy in this here very outfit," said 'Texas' Tinsdale, the battery alarmist. "Else how could them German aviators have known that Battery A was on the road last night? They knew we was on the way to the front and they tried to get us."

"Hire a hall," shouted the gruffy top sergeant. "We've got two hours to unload. A lot of you fireside veterans get busy. Gun crews get to work on the flats and drivers unload horses. No chow until we're ready to move out."

The sign on a station lamp-post told us the name of the town. It was Jarville. But it jarred nothing in our memories. None of us had ever heard of it before. I asked the captain where we were.

"Just about thirty miles behind the front," he replied. "We are moving up to our last billets as soon as we unload and feed."

The horses had made the ride wearing their harness, some of which had become entangled and broken in tran-

sit. A number of saddles had slipped from backs and were down behind forelegs.

"We're learning something every minute," the captain exclaimed. "American army regulations call for the removal of all harness from the horses before they are put into the cars, but the French have learned that that is a dangerous practice over here.

"You can't unload unharnessed horses and get them hitched to the guns as quick as you can harnessed horses. The idea is this. We're pretty close behind the lines. A German air party might make this unloading platform a visit at any time and if any of them are in the air and happen to see us unloading, they'd sure call on us.

"The French have learned that the only way to make the best of such a situation, if it should arise, is to have the horses already harnessed so that they can be run out of the cars quickly, hitched to the guns in a jiffy and hurried away. If the horses are in the cars unharnessed, and all of the harness is being carried in other cars, confusion is increased and there is a greater prospect of your losing your train, horses, guns and everything from an incendiary bomb, not to mention low flying machine work."

His explanation revealed a promising attitude that I found in almost all American soldiers of all ranks that I had encountered up to that time in France. The foundation of the attitude was a willingness to admit ignorance of new conditions and an eagerness to possess themselves of all knowledge that the French and British had acquired through bitter and costly experience.

Further than that, the American inclination pushed the soldier students to look beyond even those then accepted standards. The tendency was to improve beyond the French and British, to apply new American prin-

ciples of time or labour-saving to simple operation, to save man-power and horseflesh by sane safety appliances, to increase efficiency, speed, accuracy—in a word, their aim was to make themselves the best fighting men in the Allied cause.

One instance of this is worthy of recounting. I came upon the young Russian who was the battery saddler. He was a citizen of the United States whose uniform he wore, but he was such a new citizen, that he hardly spoke English. I found him handling a small piece of galvanised iron and a horse shoe. He appeared to be trying to fit the rumpled piece of metal into the shoe.

In his broken English he explained that he was trying to fashion a light metal plate that could be easily placed between a horse's shoe and the hoof, to protect the frog of the foot from nails picked up on the road. With all soldiers wearing hobnailed boots, the roads were full of those sharp bits of metal which had caused serious losses of horseflesh through lameness and blood poisoning.

The unloading had continued under the eyes of smiling French girls in bloomers who were just departing from their work on the early morning shift in the munition factory beside the station. These were the first American soldiers they had seen and they were free to pass comment upon our appearance. So were the men of Battery A, who overlooked the oiled, grimed faces and hands of the bloomered beauties, and announced the general verdict that "they sure were fat little devils."

The unloading completed, a scanty snack consisting of two unbuttered slices of white bread with a hunk of cold meat and maybe the bite of an onion, had been put away by the time the horses' nose bags were empty. With a French guide in the lead, we moved off the platform,

rattled along under a railroad viaduct, and down the main street of Jarville, which was large enough to boast street car tracks and a shell-damaged cathedral spire.

The remaining townsfolk had lived with the glare and rumble of the front for three years now and the passage back and forth of men and horses and guns hardly elicited as much attention as the occasional promenade of a policeman in Evanston, Illinois. But these were different men that rode through those streets that day.

This was the first battery of American artillery that had passed that way. This was an occasion and the townspeople responded to it. Children, women and old men chirped "vivas," kissed hands, bared heads and waved hats and aprons from curb and shop door and windows overhead.

There was no cheering, but there were smiles and tears and "God bless you's." It was not a vociferous greeting, but a heart-felt one. They offered all there was left of an emotion that still ran deep and strong within but that outwardly had been benumbed by three years of nerve-rack and war-weariness.

Onward into the zone of war we rode. On through successive battered villages, past houses without roofs, windows with shattered panes, stone walls with gaping shell holes through them, churches without steeples, our battery moved toward the last billeting place before entering the line.

This was the ancient town of Saint-Nicolas-du-Port on the banks of the river Meurthe. Into the Place de la Republic of the town the battery swung with a clamorous advance guard of schoolchildren and street gamins.

The top sergeant who had preceded the battery into the town, galloped up to the captain upon our entry and presented him with a sheaf of yellow paper slips,

which bore the addresses of houses and barns and the complements of men and horses to be quartered in each. This was the billeting schedule provided by the French major of the town. The guns were parked, the horses picketed and the potato peelers started on their endless task. The absence of fuel for the mess fires demanded immediate correction.

It was a few minutes past noon when the captain and I entered the office of the French Town Major. It was vacant. The officers were at *déjeuner,* we learned from an old woman who was sweeping the commandant's rooms. Where?—Ah, she knew not. We accosted the first French officer we met on the street.

"Where does the Town Major eat?" the Captain inquired in his best Indianapolis French. After the customary exchange of salutes, introductions, handshakes and greetings, the Frenchman informed us that Monsieur Le Commandant favoured the *pommard* that Madame Larue served at the Hôtel de la Fountaine.

We hurried to that place, and there in a little back room behind a plate-cluttered table with a red and white checkered table cloth, we found the Major. The Major said he spoke the English with the fluency. He demonstrated his delusion when we asked for wood.

"Wood! Ah, but it is impossible that it is wood you ask of me. Have I not this morning early seen with my own eyes the wood ordered?"

"But there is no wood," replied the Captain. "I must have wood for the fires. It is past noon and my men have not eaten."

"Ah, but I am telling you there is wood," replied the Major. "I saw your supply officer pay for the wood. By now I believe it has been delivered for you in the Place de la République."

"But it hasn't," remonstrated the Captain, "and the fires have not yet been started, and——"

"But it is on the way, probably," said the Major. "Maybe it will be there soon. Maybe it is there now."

The Captain took another tack.

"Where was the wood bought?" he asked.

"From the wood merchant beyond the river," replied the Major. "But it is already on the way, and——"

"How do you go to the wood merchant?" insisted the Captain. "We have got to have the wood toot sweet."

"Ah! *tout de suite—tout de suite—tout de suite,*" repeated the Major in tones of exasperation. "With you Americans it is always *tout de suite*. Here——"

He took my notebook and drew a plan of streets indicating the way to the place of the wood merchant. In spite of his remark and the undesired intrusion of business upon his *déjeuner,* the Major's manner was as friendly as could be expected from a Town Major. We left on the run.

The wood merchant was a big man, elderly and fat. His face was red and he had bushy grey eyebrows. He wore a smock of blue cloth that came to his knees. He remonstrated that it was useless for us to buy wood from him because wood had already been bought for us. He spoke only French. The Captain dismissed all further argument by a direct frontal attack on the subject.

"Avez-vous de bois?" asked the Captain.

"Oui," the merchant nodded.

"Avez-vous de chevaux?" the Captain asked.

"Oui," the merchant nodded again.

"Avez-vous de voiture?" the Captain asked.

"Oui,"—another nod.

"All right then," continued the Captain, and then emphasising each word by the sudden production of an-

other stiff finger on his extended hand, he said, *"Du bois —des chevaux—une voiture*—de whole damn business—and toot sweet."

In some remarkable fashion the kindly wood merchant gathered that the Captain wanted wood piled in a wagon, drawn by a horse and wanted it in a hurry. *Tout de suite,* pronounced "toot sweet" by our soldiers, was a term calling for speed, that was among the first acquired by our men in France.

The old man shrugged his shoulders, elevated his hand, palm outward, and signified with an expression of his face that it was useless to argue further for the benefit of these Americans. He turned and gave the necessary loading orders to his working force.

That working force consisted of two French girls, each about eighteen years of age. They wore long baggy bloomers of brown corduroy, tight at the ankles where they flopped about in folds over clumsy wooden shoes. They wore blouses of the same material and tam o'shanter hats to match, called *bérets.*

Each one of them had a cigarette hanging from the corner of her mouth. One stood on the ground and tossed up the thirty or forty-pound logs to her sister who stood above on top of the wagon. The latter caught them in her extended arms and placed them in a pile. To the best of my recollection, neither one of the girls missed a puff.

While the loading proceeded, the wood merchant, speaking slowly in French, made us understand the following:

"Many peculiar things happen in the war, Monsieur," he said. "Your country, the America, is the land of wonders. Listen, my name is Helois. Ten days ago there came to me one of the washerwomen who clean

the clothes on the banks of the Meurthe, and she said to me:

"'Ah, Monsieur, the wood merchant. You are the sly fox. I have your secret.' And I say to her that I know not of what she speaks.

"'You boast in the town that your two sons are at the front,' she said, 'but I know that one at least of them is not.' And I was dumbfounded. I say to her, 'Woman, it is a lie you tell me. Both of my boys are with their regiments, in the trenches even now, if by the grace of the good God they still live.'

"'No,' she say to me, 'one of your sons hides in the hotel of Madame Larue. How do I know this secret, Monsieur the wood merchant? I know because this day have I washed the shirt, with his name on it, at the river bank. His name, Helois,—the Lieutenant Helois—was stamped on the collar and the shirt came from the hotel, La Fontaine.'

"I tell her that it is a mistake—that it is the great injustice to me she speaks, and that night I dressed in my best clothes to penetrate this mystery—to meet this man who disgracefully used the name of my son—to expose this impostor who would bring shame to the name of Helois, the wood merchant, whose two sons have been fighting for France these three long years.

"And so, Monsieur, I meet this man at the hotel. She was right. His name was Helois. Here is his card. The Lieutenant Louis F. Helois, and he is a lieutenant in the United States Army."

"So it was a mistake," replied the Captain, handing the card back to the wood merchant, whose lobster red features bore an enigmatical smile.

"No,—not the mistake, the truth," replied the wood merchant. "Not my son—but my grandson—the son of

my son—the son of my third son who went to America years ago. And now he comes back in the uniform of liberty to fight again for France. Ah, *Messieurs les Officiers*—the sons of France return from the ends of the world to fight her cause."

While the wood merchant was telling us that the American grandson had only stopped three days in the town and then had moved up to service at the front, the air was shattered by a loud report. It was the snap of the whip in the hands of the young French amazon, standing high on the load of wood. We escorted the fuel proudly to the Place de la République. Soon the fires were burning briskly and the smell of onions and coffee and hot chow was on the air.

The stoves were pitched at the bottom of a stone monument in the centre of the square. Bags of potatoes and onions and burlap covered quarters of beef and other pieces of mess sergeants paraphernalia were piled on the steps of the monument, which was covered with the green and black scars from dampness and age.

The plinth supported a stone shaft fifteen feet in height, which touched the lower branches of the trees. The monument was topped with a huge cross of stone on which was the sculptured figure of the Christ.

Little Sykoff, the battery mess sergeant, stood over the stove at the bottom of the monument. He held in his hand a frying pan, which he shook back and forth over the fire to prevent the sizzling chips in the pan from burning. His eyes lowered from an inspection of the monument and met mine. He smiled.

"Mr. Gibbons," he said, "if that brother of mine, who runs the photograph gallery out on Paulina and Madison Streets in Chicago, could only see me now, he sure would

tell the Rabbi. Can you beat it—a Jew here frying ham in the shadow of the Cross."

It was rather hard to beat—and so was the ham. We made this concession as we sat on the plinth of the monument and polished our mess kits with bread. And such bread—it was the regulation United States army issue bread—white, firm and chuck full of nourishment—bread that seemed like cake to the French youngsters who tasted it and who returned with open mouths and outstretched hands for more of the "good white bread."

After the meal, those members of Battery A not detailed for immediate duty denied themselves none of the joys that a new town, in a strange land, holds for a soldier.

Saint-Nicholas-du-Port boasts a remarkable cathedral of mediæval architecture, of enormous dimensions. It was crumbling with age, but still housed the holy. Time and the elements had left the traces of their rough usage upon the edifice.

Half of the statues on the broad façade of the cathedral had been broken, and now the niches afforded domiciles for families of pigeons. On the ground, in a careless pile, to one side of the frontal arch, was an ignominious pile of miscellaneous arms and legs and heads of sculptured figures, resting there in anything but saintly dignity. Two of our young artillerymen were standing in front of the cathedral surveying it.

"Certainly is in need of repairs," said one of them. "I'll bet they haven't done no bricklaying or plumbing on this place since before the Civil War."

"That ain't hardly the right way to treat old Saints," replied his companion, referring to the pile of broken statuary. "Seems like they ought to cement the arms and legs and heads back on those old boys and old girls

and put them back on their pedestals. I guess, though, there ain't nobody living to identify the pieces, so they could get the right arms and heads on the right bodies."

Our battery had among its drivers an old timer who might have been called a historian. His opinion held weight in the organisation. He professed to be able to read American ball scores and war news out of French newspapers, a number of which he always carried. Later that day, I heard him lecturing the cathedral critics on their lack of appreciation of art and history.

"New things ain't art," he told them; "things has got to be old before they are artistic. Nobody'd look at the Venus dee Milo if she had all her arms on. You never hear nobody admiring a modern up-to-date castle with electric lighting and bath tubs in it. It simply ain't art.

"Now, this cathedral is art. This country around here is just full of history. Here's where whole book stores of it was written. Why, say, there was batteries of artillery rolling through this country a million years ago. It was right around here that Napoleon joined forces with Julius Cæsar to fight the Crusaders. This here is sacred ground."

In the evening, a number of the battery, located the *buvette* that carried across its curtained front the gold lettered sign *bar Parisian.* It was a find. Some thirty American artillerymen crowded around the tables.

Cigarette smoke filled the low-ceilinged room with blue layers, through which the lamp light shone. In one corner stood a mechanical piano which swallowed big copper sous and gave out discord's metallic melody. It was of an American make and the best number on its printed programme was "Aren't you Coming Back to Old Virginia, Molly?" Sous followed sous into this howitzer

of harmony and it knew no rest that night. Everybody joined in and helped it out on the choruses.

Things were going fine when the door opened at about nine thirty, and there stood two members of the American Provost Guard. They carried with them two orders. One instructed Madame, the proprietress, to dispense no more red ink or beer to American soldiers that night, and the other was a direction to all Americans around the table to get back to their billets for the night.

The bunch left with reluctance but without a grumble. It was warm and comfortable within the *bar Parisian* and Madame's smiles and red wine and beer and Camembert cheese composed the Broadway of many recent dreams. But they left without complaint.

They made their rollicking departure, returning Madame's parting smiles, gallantly lifting their steel helmets and showering her with vociferous "bong swore's." And—well it simply must be told. She kissed the last one out out the door and, turning, wiped away a tear with the corner of her apron. Madame had seen youth on the way to the front before.

The billets were comfortable. Some were better than others. Picket line details slept in their blankets in the hay over the stables. Gun crews drew beds and pallets on the floor in occupied houses. In these homes there was always that hour before retirement for the night when the old men and remaining women of the French household and their several military guests billeted in the place, would gather about the fireplace in the kitchen and regale one another with stories, recounted by the murder of French and English languages and a wealth of pantomime.

Louise, the eighteen-year-old daughter of the town-crier—he who daily beat the drum in front of the Hôtel

de Ville and read lengthy bulletins, was interested in the workings of Gunner Black's colt automatic. Gunner Black, most anxious to show her, demonstrated the action of the pistol but, forgetting that inevitable shell in the chamber, shot himself in the arm.

It was only an incident. The noise scared Louise, but not the wound. She had seen too many Americans get shot in the moving pictures.

The captain and I were quartered in the house of the Curé of the cathedral. The old housekeeper of the place made the captain blush when she remarked her surprise that there were such young captains in the American army. Her name was Madame Dupont, and she was more than pleased to learn from the captain that that had been the maiden name of his mother.

The captain's room had the interior dimensions and heavy decorations of the mystic inner sanctum of some secret grand lodge. Religious paintings and symbols hung from the walls, which were papered in dark red to match the heavy plush hangings over the ever closed windows.

Two doors in the blank wall swung open revealing a hermetically sealed recess in which a bed just fitted. This arrangement, quite common in France, indicated that the device now popular in two-room sleeping apartments in America, must have been suggested by the sleeping customs of mediæval times.

Early the next morning, our battery pulled out for the front. We were bound for the line. We took the roads out of Saint Nicolas to the east, making our way toward that part of the front that was known as the Luneville sector. Our way lay through the towns of Dombasle, Sommerviller, Maixe, Einville, Valhey, Serres, to the remains of the ruined village of Hoeville.

The sector runs almost along the border between France and old Lorraine, occupied by the Germans since 1870. Even the names of the old French towns beyond the border had been changed to German in the effort of the Prussians to Germanise the stolen province.

It was in this section during the few days just prior to the outbreak of the war that France made unwise demonstration of her disinclination toward hostilities with Germany. Every soldier in France was under arms, as was every soldier in Europe. France had military patrols along her borders. In the French chamber of deputies, the socialists had rushed through a measure which was calculated to convince the German people that France had no intentions or desire of menacing German territory. By that measure every French soldier was withdrawn from the Franco-German border to a line ten miles inside of France. The German appreciation of this evidence of peacefulness was manifested when the enemy, at the outbreak of the war, moved across the border and occupied that ten-mile strip of France.

France had succeeded in driving the enemy back again in that part of Lorraine, but only at the cost of many lives and the destruction of many French towns and villages. Since the close of the fighting season of 1914, there had been little or no progress on either side at this point. The opposing lines here had been stationary for almost three years and it was known on both sides as a quiet sector.

The country side was of a rolling character, but very damp. At that season of the year when our first American fighting men reached the Western front, that part of the line that they occupied was particularly muddy and miserable.

Before nine o'clock that morning as we rode on to

the front, the horse-drawn traffic, including our battery, was forced to take the side of the road numerous times to permit the passage of long trains of motor trucks loaded down with American infantrymen, bound in the same direction.

Most of the motor vehicles were of the omnibus type. A number of them were worthy old double-deckers that had seen long years of peaceful service on the boulevards of Paris before the war. Slats of wood ran lengthwise across the windows of the lower seating compartment and through these apertures young, sun-burned, American faces topped with steel helmets, peered forth.

Some of our men reposed languidly on the rear steps of the busses or on the tops. Most of the bus-loads were singing rollicking choruses. The men were in good spirits. They had been cheered in every village they had passed through on the way from their training area.

"Howdy, bowleg," was the greeting shouted by one of these motoring mockers, who looked down on our saddled steeds, "better get a hustle on them hayburners. We're going to be in Berlin by the time you get where the front used to be."

"Yes, you will," replied one of the mounted artillerymen, with a negative inflection. "You'll get a hell of a long ways without us. If you doughboys start anything without the artillery, you'll see Berlin through the bars of a prisoner's cage."

"Lucky pups—the artillery—nothing to do but ride," was the passing shout of another taunter, perched high on a bus. This was an unanswerable revision of an old taunt that the artillery used to shout to passing infantry in the days when a foot soldier was really a foot soldier. Then the easy-riding mounted troops, when passing an

infantry column on the road, would say, "Pretty soft for the doughboys—nothing to do but walk."

"Times certainly have changed," one of our battery drivers felt it necessary to remark to me in defence of his branch of the service. "But there ain't no spark plugs or carburetors to get out of order on our mounts.

"However, we do have our troubles. That runaway wheeler in No. 2 section broke away from the picket line last night and Kemball and I were detailed to hunt all over town for him.

"You know that dark, winding, narrow street, that winds down the hill back of the cathedral. Well, it was about midnight and blacker than the ace of spades, when Kemball and I pushed along there in the dark, looking for that onery animal.

"Suddenly, we heard a sharp clatter on the cobblestones half a block up the hill. It was coming our way full speed. 'Here he comes now,' said Kemball, 'and he's galloping like hell. Jump into a doorway or he'll climb all over us.'

"We waited there pressed against the wall in the dark as the galloping came up to us and passed. What dy'e s'pose it was? It wasn't that runaway horse at all. Just a couple of them French kids chasing one another in wooden shoes."

The road to the front was a populous one. We passed numerous groups of supply wagons carrying food and fodder up to the front lines. Other wagons were returning empty and here and there came an ambulance with bulgy blankets outlining the figures of stretcher cases, piled two high and two wide. Occasionally a Y. M. C. A. runabout loaded down with coffee pots and candy tins and driven by helmeted wearers of the Red

Triangle, would pass us carrying its store of extras to the boys up front.

We passed through villages where manufacturing plants were still in operation and, nearer the front, the roads lay through smaller hamlets, shell torn and deserted, save for sentries who stood guard in wooden coops at intersections. Civilians became fewer and fewer, although there was not a village that did not have one or two women or children or old men unfit for uniform.

Finally the road mounted a rolling hill and here it was bordered by roadside screens consisting of stretched chicken wire to which whisps of straw and grass and bits of green dyed cloth had been attached. Our men riding behind the screen peered through apertures in it and saw the distant hills forward, from which German glasses could have observed all passage along that road had it not been for the screen.

So we moved into position. It was late in the night of October 22nd, 1917, that our batteries of artillery and companies of infantry moved through the darkness on the last lap of their trip to the front. The roads were sticky and gummy. A light rain was falling. The guns boomed in front of us, but not with any continued intensity. Through streets paved with slippery cobbles and bordered with the bare skeletons of shell-wrecked houses, our American squads marched four abreast. Their passing in the darkness was accompanied by the sound of the unhastened tread of many hobnailed boots.

At times, the rays of a cautiously flashed electric light would reveal our infantrymen with packs on back and rifles slung over their shoulders. A stiff wind whipped the rain into their faces and tugged the bottoms of their flapping, wet overcoats.

Notwithstanding the fact that they had made it on foot a number of miles from the place where they had disembarked from the motor trucks, the men marched along to the soft singing of songs, which were ordered discontinued as the marching columns got closer to the communicating trenches which led into the front line.

In the march were machine gun carts hauled by American mules and rolling kitchens, which at times dropped on the darkened road swirls of glowing red embers that had to be hurriedly stamped out. Anxious American staff officers consulted their wrist watches frequently in evidence of the concern they felt as to whether the various moving units were reaching designated points upon the scheduled minute.

It was after midnight that our men reached the front line. It was the morning of October 23rd, 1917, that American infantrymen and Bavarian regiments of *Landwehr* and *Landsturm* faced one another for the first time in front line positions on the European front.

Less than eight hundred yards of slate and drab-coloured soft ground, blotched with rust-red expanses of wire entanglements, separated the hostile lines.

There was no moon. A few cloud-veiled stars only seemed to accentuate the blackness of the night. There, in the darkness and the mud, on the slippery firing step of trench walls and in damp, foul-smelling dugouts, young red-blooded Americans tingled for the first time with the thrill that they had trained so long and travelled so far to experience.

Through unfortunate management of the Press arrangements in connection with this great historical event, American correspondents accredited by the War Department to our forces, were prevented from accompanying our men into the front that night. Good fortune, how-

ever, favoured me as one of the two sole exceptions to this circumstance. Raymond G. Carroll, correspondent of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger,* and myself, representing the Chicago *Tribune* and its associated papers, were the only two newspaper men who went into the line with the men that night. For enjoying this unusual opportunity, we were both arrested several days later, not, however, until after we had obtained the first-hand story of the great event.

A mean drizzle of rain was falling that night, but it felt cool on the pink American cheeks that were hot with excitement. The very wetness of the air impregnated all it touched with the momentousness of the hour. Spirits were high and the mud was deep, but we who were there had the feeling that history was chiselling that night's date into her book of ages.

Occasionally a shell wheezed over through the soggy atmosphere, seeming to leave an unseen arc in the darkness above. It would terminate with a sullen thump in some spongy, water-soaked mound behind us. Then an answering missive of steel would whine away into the populated invisibility in front of us.

French comrades, in half English and half French, gushed their congratulations, and shook us by the hand. Some of us were even hugged and kissed on both cheeks. Our men took the places of French platoons that were sent back to rest billets. But other French platoons remained shoulder to shoulder with our men in the front line. The presence of our troops there was in continuation of their training for the purpose of providing a nucleus for the construction of later contingents. Both our infantry and our artillery acted in conjunction with the French infantry and artillery and the sector remained under French command.

Our men were eager to ask questions and the French were ever ready to respond. They first told us about the difference in the sound of shells. Now that one that started with a bark in back of us and whined over our heads is a *départ*. It is an Allied shell on its way to the Germans. Now, this one, that whines over first and ends with a distant grunt, like a strong wallop on a wet carpet, is an *arrivée*. It has arrived from Germany. In the dugouts, our men smoked dozens of cigarettes, lighting fresh ones from the half-consumed butts. It is the appetite that comes with the progressive realisation of a long deferred hope. It is the tension that comes from at last arriving at an object and then finding nothing to do, now that you are there. It is the nervousness that nerveless youth suffers in inactivity.

The men sloshed back and forth through the mud along the narrow confines of the trench. The order is against much movement, but immobility is unbearable. Wet slickers rustle against one another in the narrow traverses, and equipment, principally the French and English gas masks, hanging at either hip become entangled in the darkness.

At times a steel helmet falls from some unaccustomed head and, hitting perhaps a projecting rock in the trench wall, gives forth a clang which is followed by curses from its clumsy owner and an admonition of quiet from some young lieutenant.

"Olson, keep your damn fool head down below the top of that trench or you'll get it blown off." The sergeant is talking, and Olson, who brought from Minnesota a keen desire to see No Man's Land even at the risk of his life, is forced to repress the yearning.

"Two men over in B Company just got holes drilled through their beans for doing the same thing," contin-

ued the sergeant. "There's nothing you can see out there anyhow. It's all darkness."

Either consciously or unconsciously, the sergeant was lying, for the purpose of saving Olson and others from a fool's fate. There was not a single casualty in any American unit on the line that first night.

"Where is the telephone dugout?" a young lieutenant asked his French colleague. "I want to speak to the battalion commander."

"But you must not speak English over the telephone," replied the Frenchman, "the Germans will hear you with the instruments they use to tap the underground circuit."

"But I was going to use our American code," said the front line novice; "if the Germans tap in they won't be able to figure out what it means."

"Ah, no, my friend," replied the Frenchman, smiling. "They won't know what the message means, but your voice and language will mean to them that Americans are occupying the sector in front of them, and we want to give them that information in another way, *n'est ce pas?*"

Undoubtedly there was some concern in the German trenches just over the way with regard to what was taking place in our lines. Relief periods are ticklish intervals for the side making them. It is quite possible that some intimation of our presence may have been given.

There was considerable conversation and movement among our men that night. Jimmy found it frequently necessary to call the attention of Johnny to some new thing he had discovered. And of a consequence, much natural, but needless, chattering resulted.

I believe the Germans did become nervous because they

made repeated attacks on the enveloping darkness with numbers of star shells. These aerial beauties of night warfare released from their exploding encasements high in the air, hung from white silk parachutes above the American amateurs.

The numerous company and battery jesters did not refrain from imitative expressions of "Ahs" and "Ohs" and "Ain't it bootiful?" as their laughing upturned faces were illuminated in the white light.

That night one rocket went up shortly before morning. It had a different effect from its predecessors. It reared itself from the darkness somewhere on the left. Its flight was noiseless as it mounted higher and higher on its fiery staff. Then it burst in a shower of green balls of fire.

That meant business. One green rocket was the signal that the Germans were sending over gas shells. It was an alarm that meant the donning of gas masks. On they went quickly. It was the first time this equipment had been adjusted under emergency conditions, yet the men appeared to have mastered the contrivances.

Then the word was passed along the trenches and through the dugouts for the removal of the masks. It had not been a French signal. The green rocket had been sent up by the Germans. The enemy was using green rockets that night as a signal of their own. There had been no gas shells. It was a false alarm.

"The best kind of practice in the world," said one of our battalion commanders; "it's just the stuff we're here for. I hope the Germans happen to do that every night a new bunch of our men get in these trenches."

While the infantry were experiencing these initial thrills in the front line, our gunners were struggling in the mud of the black gun pits to get their pieces into

position in the quickest possible time, and achieve the honour of firing that first American shot in the war.

Each battery worked feverishly in intense competition with every other battery. Battery A of the 6th Field, to which I had attached myself, lost in the race for the honour. Another battery in the same regiment accomplished the achievement.

That was Battery C of the 6th Field Artillery. I am reproducing, herewith, for what I believe is the first time, the exact firing data on that shot and the officers and men who took part in it.

By almost superhuman work through the entire previous day and night, details of men from Battery C had pulled one cannon by ropes across a muddy, almost impassable, meadow. So anxious were they to get off the first shot that they did not stop for meals.

They managed to drag the piece into an old abandoned French gun pit. The historical position of that gun was one kilometre due east of the town of Bathelemont and three hundred metres northeast of the Bauzemont-Bathelemont road. The position was located two miles from the old international boundary line between France and German-Lorraine. The position was one and one-half kilometres back of the French first line, then occupied by Americans.

The first shot was fired at 6:5:10 A. M., October 23rd, 1917. Those who participated in the firing of the shot were as follows:

Lieutenant F. M. Mitchell, U.S.R., acted as platoon chief.
Corporal Robert Braley laid the piece.
Sergeant Elward Warthen loaded the piece.

Sergeant Frank Grabowski prepared the fuse for cutting.
Private Louis Varady prepared the fuse for cutting.
Private John J. Wodarczak prepared the fuse for cutting.
Corporal Osborne W. De Varila prepared the fuse for cutting.
Sergeant Lonnie Domonick cut the fuse.
Captain Idus R. McLendon gave the command to fire.
Sergeant Alex L. Arch fired first shot.

The missile fired was a 75 millimetre or 3-inch high-explosive shell. The target was a German battery of 150 milimetre or 6-inch guns located two kilometres back of the German first line trenches, and one kilometre in back of the boundary line between France and German-Lorraine. The position of that enemy battery on the map was in a field 100 metres west of the town which the French still call Xanrey, but which the Germans have called Schenris since they took it from France in 1870. Near that spot—and damn near—fell the first American shell fired in the great war.

NOTE: It is peculiar to note that I am writing this chapter at Atlantic City, October 23rd, 1918, just one year to the day after the event. That shot surely started something.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST AMERICAN SECTOR

It was in the Luneville sector, described in the preceding chapter, that the first American fighting men faced the Germans on the western front. It was there that the enemy captured its first American prisoners in a small midnight raid; it was there that we captured some prisoners of theirs, and inflicted our first German casualties; it was there that the first American fighting man laid down his life on the western front.

In spite of these facts, however, the occupation of those front line posts in that sector constituted nothing more than a post-graduate course in training under the capable direction of French instructors who advised our officers and men in everything they did.

At the conclusion of the course, which extended over a number of weeks, the American forces engaged in it were withdrawn from the line and retired for a well-earned rest period and for reorganisation purposes in areas back of the line. There they renewed equipment and prepared for the occupation of the first all-American sector on the western front.

That sector was located in Lorraine some distance to the east of the Luneville front. It was north and slightly west of the city of Toul. It was on the east side of the St. Mihiel salient, then occupied by the Germans.

The sector occupied a position in what the French called the Pont-à-Mousson front. Our men were to occupy an eight-mile section of the front line trenches extending from a point west of the town of Flirey, to a

point west of the ruins of the town of Seicheprey. The position was not far from the French stronghold of Verdun to the northwest or the German stronghold of Metz to the northeast, and was equidistant from both.

That line changed from French blue to American khaki on the night of January 21st. The sector became American at midnight. I watched the men as they marched into the line. In small squads they proceeded silently up the road toward the north, from which direction a raw wind brought occasional sounds resembling the falling of steel plates on the wooden floor of a long corridor.

A half moon doubly ringed by mist, made the hazy night look grey. At intervals, phantom flashes flushed the sky. The mud of the roadway formed a colourless paste that made marching not unlike skating on a platter of glue.

This was their departure for the front—this particular battalion—the first battalion of the 16th United States Infantry. I knew, and every man in it knew, what was before them.

Each man was in for a long tour of duty in trenches knee-deep with melted snow and mud. Each platoon commander knew the particular portion of that battle-battered bog into which he must lead his men. Each company commander knew the section of shell-punctured, swamp land that was his to hold, and the battalion commander, a veteran American soldier, was well aware of the particular perils of the position which his one thousand or more men were going to occupy in the very jaw-joint of a narrowing salient.

All branches of the United States military forces may take special pride in that first battalion that went into the new American line that night. The commander

represented the U. S. Officers Reserve Corps, and the other officers and men were from the reserves, the regulars, West Point, the National Guard and the National Army. Moreover, the organisation comprised men from all parts of the United States as well as men whose parents had come from almost every race and nationality in the world. One company alone possessed such a babble of dialects among its new Americans, that it proudly called itself, the Foreign Legion.

For two days the battalion had rested in the mud of the semi-destroyed village of Ansauville, several miles back of the front. A broad, shallow stream, then at the flood, wound through and over most of the village site. Walking anywhere near the border of the water, one pulled about with him pounds of tenacious, black gumbo. Dogs and hogs, ducks and horses, and men,—all were painted with nature's handiest camouflage.

Where the stream left the gaping ruins of a stone house on the edge of the village, there was a well-kept French graveyard, clinging to the slope of a small hill. Above the ruins of the hamlet, stood the steeple of the old stone church, from which it was customary to ring the alarm when the Germans sent over their shells of poison gas.

Our officers busied themselves with unfinished supply problems. Such matters as rubber boots for the men, duck boards for the trenches, food for the mules, and ration containers necessary for the conveyance of hot food to the front lines, were not permitted to interfere with the battalion's movements. In war, there is always the alternative of doing without or doing with makeshifts, and that particular battalion commander, after three years of war, was the kind of a soldier who

made the best of circumstances no matter how adverse they may have been.

That commander was Major Griffiths. He was an American fighting man. His military record began in the Philippine Insurrection, when, as a sergeant in a Tennessee regiment of National Guard, he was mentioned in orders for conspicuous gallantry. At the suppression of the insurrection, he became a major in the United States Constabulary in the Philippines. He resigned his majority in 1914, entered the Australian forces, and was wounded with them in the bloody landing at Gallipoli. He was invalided to England, where, upon his partial recovery, he was promoted to major in the British forces and was sent to France in command of a battalion of the Sherwood Foresters. With them, he received two more wounds, one at the Battle of Ypres, and another during the fighting around Loos.

He was in an English hospital when America entered the war, but he hurried his convalescence and obtained a transfer back to the army of his own country. He hadn't regained as yet the full use of his right hand, his face still retained a hospital pallor, and an X-ray photograph of his body revealed the presence of numerous pieces of shell still lodged there. But on that night of January 21st, he could not conceal the pride that he felt in the honour in having been the one chosen to command the battalion of Americans that was to take over the first American sector in France. Major Griffiths survived those strenuous days on the Pont-à-Mousson front, but he received a fatal wound three months later at the head of his battalion in front of Catigny, in Picardy. He died fighting under his own flag.

Just before daylight failed that wintry day, three poilus walked down the road from the front and into

Ansauville. Two of them were helping a third, whose bandaged arm and shoulder explained the mission of the party. As they passed the rolling kitchens where the Americans were receiving their last meal before entering the trenches, there was silence and not even an exchange of greetings or smiles.

This lack of expression only indicated the depth of feeling stirred by the appearance of this wounded French soldier. The incident, although comparatively trivial, seemed to arouse within our men a solemn grimness and a more fervent determination to pay back the enemy in kind. In silence, our men finished that last meal, which consisted of cold corned beef, two slices of dry bread per man, and coffee.

The sight of that one wounded man did not make our boys realise more than they already did, what was in front of them. They had already made a forty mile march over frozen roads up to this place and had incurred discomforts seemingly greater than a shell-shattered arm or a bullet-fractured shoulder. After that gruelling hiking experience, it was a pleasant prospect to look forward to a chance of venting one's feelings on the enemy.

At the same time, no chip-on-the-shoulder cockiness marked the disposition of these men about to take first grips with the Germans,—no challenging bravado was revealed in the actions or statements of these grim, serious trail-blazers of the American front, whose attitude appeared to be one of soldierly resignation to the first martial principle, "Orders is orders."

As the companies lined up in the village street in full marching order, awaiting the command to move, several half-hearted attempts at jocularity died cold. One irrepressible made a futile attempt at frivolity by

announcing that he had Cherokee blood in his veins and was so tough he could "spit battleships." This attempted jocularity drew as much mirth as an undertaker's final invitation to the mourners to take the last, long look at the departed.

One bright-faced youngster tingling with the thrill of anticipation, leaped on a gun carriage and absently whistled a shrill medley, beginning with "Yaka-hula," and ending with "Just a Song at Twilight." There was food for thought in the progress of his efforts from the frivolous to the pensive, but there was little time for such thoughts. No one even told him to shut up.

While there was still light, an aerial battle took place overhead. For fifteen minutes, the French anti-aircraft guns banged away at three German planes, which were audaciously sailing over our lines. The Americans rooted like bleacherites for the guns but the home team failed to score, and the Germans sailed serenely home. They apparently had had time to make adequate observations.

During the entire afternoon, German sausage balloons had hung high in the air back of the hostile line, offering additional advantages for enemy observation. On the highroad leading from Ansauville, a conspicuous sign *L'enemie vous voit* informed newcomers that German eyes were watching their movements and could interfere at any time with a long range shell. The fact was that the Germans held high ground and their glasses could command almost all of the terrain back of our lines.

Under this seemingly eternal espionage punctuated at intervals by heavy shelling, several old women of the village had remained in their homes, living above the ground on quiet days and moving their knitting to the

front yard dugout at times when gas and shell and bomb interfered. Some of these women operated small shops in the front rooms of their damaged homes and the Americans lined up in front of the window counters and exchanged dirty French paper money for canned *pâté de foi gras* or jars of mustard.

A machine gun company with mule-drawn carts led the movement from Ansauville into the front. It was followed at fifty yard intervals by other sections. Progress down that road was executed in small groups—it was better to lose one whole section than an entire company.

That highroad to the front, with its border of shell-withered trees, was revealed that night against a bluish grey horizon occasionally rimmed with red. Against the sky, the moving groups were defined as impersonal black blocks. Young lieutenants marched ahead of each platoon. In the hazy light, it was difficult to distinguish them. The only difference was that their hips seemed bulkier from the heavy sacks, field glasses, map cases, canteens, pistol holsters and cartridge clips.

Each section, as it marched out of the village, passed under the eye of Major Griffiths, who sat on his horse in the black shadow of a wall. A sergeant commanding one section was coming toward him.

"Halt!" ordered the Major. "Sergeant, where is your helmet?"

"One of the men in my section is wearing it, sir," replied the Sergeant.

"Why?" snapped the Major.

"Somebody took his and he hadn't any," said the Sergeant, "so I made him wear mine, sir."

"Get it back and wear it yourself," the Major ordered.

"Nothing could hurt the head of a man who couldn't hang on to his own helmet."

The order was obeyed, the section marched on and a bareheaded Irishman out of hearing of the Major said, "I told the Sergeant not to make me wear it; I don't need the damn thing."

Another section passed forward, the moonlight gleaming on the helmets jauntily cocked over one ear and casting black shadows over the faces of the wearers. From these shadows glowed red dots of fire.

"Drop those cigarettes," came the command from the all watchful, unseen presence mounted on the horse in the shadow of the wall. Automatically, the section spouted red arcs that fell to the road on either side in a shower of sparks.

"It's a damn shame to do that." Major Griffith spoke to me standing beside his horse. "You can't see a cigarette light fifty yards away, but if there were no orders against smoking, the men would be lighting matches or dumping pipes, and such flashes can be seen."

There was need for caution. The enemy was always watchful for an interval when one organisation was relieving another on the line. That period represented the time when an attack could cause the greatest confusion in the ranks of the defenders. But that night our men accomplished the relief of the French Moroccan division then in the line without incident.

Two nights later, in company with a party of correspondents, I paid a midnight visit to our men in the front line trenches of that first American sector. With all lights out, cigarettes tabooed and the siren silenced, our overloaded motor slushed slowly along the shell-pitted roads, carefully skirting groups of marching men

and lumbering supply wagons that took shape suddenly out of the mist-laden road in front of us.

Although it was not raining, moisture seemed to drip from everything, and vapours from the ground, mixing with the fog overhead, almost obscured the hard-working moon.

In the greyness of the night sight and smell lost their keenness, and familiar objects assumed unnatural forms, grotesque and indistinct.

From somewhere ahead dull, muffled thumps in the mist brought memories of spring house cleaning and the dusting out of old cushions, but it was really the three-year-old song of the guns. Nature had censored observation by covering the spectacle with the mantle of indefiniteness. Still this was the big thing we had come to see—night work in and behind the front lines of the American sector.

We approached an engineers' dump, where the phantoms of fog gradually materialised into helmeted khaki figures that moved in mud knee-deep and carried boxes and planks and bundles of tools. Total silence covered all the activity and not a ray of light revealed what mysteries had been worked here in surroundings that seemed no part of this world.

An irregular pile of rock loomed grey and sinister before us, and, looking upward, we judged, from its gaping walls, that it was the remains of a church steeple. It was the dominating ruin in the town of Beaumont.

"Turn here to the left," the officer conducting our party whispered into the ear of the driver.

The sudden execution of the command caused the officer's helmet to rasp against that of the driver with a sound that set the cautious whispering to naught.

"Park here in the shadow," he continued. "Make no

noise; show no light. They dropped shells here ten minutes ago. Gentlemen, this is regimental headquarters. Follow me."

In a well buttressed cellar, surmounted by a pile of ruins, we found the colonel sitting at a wooden table in front of a grandfather's clock of scratched mahogany. He called the roll—five special correspondents, Captain Chandler, American press officer, with a goatee and fur coat to match; Captain Vielcastel, a French press officer, who is a marquis and speaks English, and a lieutenant from brigade headquarters, who already had been named "Whispering Willie."

The colonel offered sticks to those with the cane habit. With two runners in the lead, we started down what had been the main street of the ruined village.

"I can't understand the dropping of that shell over here to-night," the colonel said. "When we relieved the French, there had been a long-standing agreement against such discourtesy. It's hard to believe the Boche would make a scrap of paper out of that agreement. They must have had a new gunner on the piece. We sent back two shells into their regimental headquarters. They have been quiet since."

Ten minutes' walk through the mud, and the colonel stopped to announce: "Within a hundred yards of you, a number of men are working. Can you hear 'em?"

No one could, so he showed us a long line of sweating Americans stretching off somewhere into the fog. Their job was more of the endless trench digging and improving behind the lines. While one party swung pick and spade in the trenches, relief parties slept on the ground nearby. The colonel explained that these parties arrived after dark, worked all night, and then carefully camouflaged all evidences of new earth and departed before

daylight, leaving no trace of their night's work to be discovered by prying airman. Often the work was carried on under an intermittent shelling, but that night only two shells had landed near them.

An American-manned field gun shattered the silence, so close to us that we could feel its breath and had a greater respect for its bite. The proximity of the gun had not even been guessed by any of our party. A yellow stab of flame seemed to burn the mist through which the shell screeched on its way toward Germany.

Correspondent Junius Woods, who was wearing an oversized pair of hip rubber boots, immediately strapped the tops to his belt.

"I am taking no chance," he said; "I almost jumped out of them that time. They ought to send men out with a red flag before they pull off a blast like that."

The colonel then left us and with the whispering lieutenant and runners in advance, we continued toward the front.

"Walk in parties of two," was the order of the soft-toned subaltern. "Each party keep ten yards apart. Don't smoke. Don't talk. This road is reached by their field pieces. They also cover it with indirect machine gun fire. They sniped the brigade commander right along here this morning. He had to get down into the mud. I can afford to lose some of you, but not the entire party. If anything comes over, you are to jump into the communicating trenches on the right side of the road."

His instructions were obeyed and it was almost with relief that, ten minutes later, we followed him down the slippery side of the muddy bank and landed in front of a dugout.

In the long, narrow, low-ceilinged shelter which com-

pletely tunnelled the road at a depth of twenty feet, two twenty-year-old Americans were hugging a brazier filled with charcoal. In this dugout was housed a group from a machine gun battalion, some of whose members were snoring in a double tier of bunks on the side.

Deep trenches at the other end of the dugout led to the gun pits, where this new arm of the service operated at ranges of two miles. These special squads fired over the heads of those in front of them or over the contours of the ground and put down a leaden barrage on the front line of the Germans. The firing not only was indirect but was without correction from the rectifying observation, of which the artillery had the benefit by watching the burst of their missiles.

Regaining the road, we walked on through the ruins on the edge of the village of Seicheprey, where our way led through a drunken colony of leaning walls and brick piles.

Here was the battalion headquarters, located underneath the old stones of a barn which was topped by the barest skeleton of a roof. What had been the first floor of the structure had been weighted down heavily with railroad iron and concrete to form the roof of the commander's dugout. The sides of the decrepit structure bulged outward and were prevented from bursting by timber props radiating on all sides like the legs of a centipede. A mule team stood in front of the dugout.

"What's that?" the whispering lieutenant inquired in hushed tones from a soldier in the road, as he pointed over the mules to the battalion headquarters.

"What's what?" the soldier replied without respect.

The obscurity of night is a great reducer of ranks. In the mist officer and man look alike.

"Why, that?" repeated "Whispering Willie" in lower,

but angrier tones. "What's that there?" he reiterated, pointing at the mules.

"Can't you see it's mules?" replied the man in an immoderate tone of voice, betraying annoyance.

We were spared what followed. The lieutenant undoubtedly confirmed his rank, and the man undoubtedly proffered unto him the respect withheld by mistake. When "Whispering Willie" joined us several minutes later in the dugout, his helmet rode on the back of his head, but his dignity was on straight.

The Battalion Commander, Major Griffith, was so glad to see us that he sent for another bottle of the murky grey water that came from a well on one side of a well populated graveyard not fifty yards from his post.

"A good night," he said; "haven't seen it so quiet in three years. We have inter-battalion relief on. Some new companies are taking over the lines. Some of them are new to the front trenches and I'm going out with you and put them up on their toes. Wait till I report in."

He rang the field telephone on the wall and waited for an answer. An oil lamp hung from a low ceiling over the map table. In the hot, smoky air we quietly held our places while the connection was made.

"Hello," the Major said, "operator, connect me with Milwaukee." Another wait——

"Hello, Milwaukee, this is Larson. I'm talking from Hamburg. I'm leaving this post with a deck of cards and a runner. If you want me you can get me at Coney Island or Hinky Dink's. Wurtzburger will sit in here."

"Some code, Major," Lincoln Eyre, correspondent, said. "What does a pack of cards indicate?"

"Why, anybody who comes out here when he doesn't have to is a funny card," the Major replied, "and it looks

GRAVE OF FIRST AMERICAN KILLED IN FRANCE

Translation: Here Lie the First Soldiers of the Great Republic of the United States of America, Fallen on French Soil for Justice and for Liberty, November 3rd, 1917

as if I have a pack of them to-night. Fritz gets quite a few things that go over our wires and we get lots of his. All are tapped by induction.

"Sometimes the stuff we get is important and sometimes it isn't. Our wire tapping report last night carried a passage something like this:—The German operator at one post speaking to the operator at another said:

" 'Hello, Herman, where did that last shell drop?'

"Second operator replied, 'It killed two men in a ration party in a communicating trench and spilt all the soup. No hot food for you to-night, Rudolph.'

"Herman replying: 'That's all right. We have got some beer here.'

"Then there was a confusion of sounds and a German was heard talking to some one in his dugout. He said:

" 'Hurry, here comes the lieutenant! Hide the can!'

"That's the way it goes," added the Major, "but if we heard that the society editor of the *Fliegende Blaetter* and half a dozen pencil strafers were touring the German front line, we'd send 'em over something that would start 'em humming a hymn of hate. If they knew I was joy riding a party of correspondents around the diggin's to-night, they might give you something to write about and cost me a platoon or two. You're not worth it. Come on."

Our party now numbered nine and we pushed off, stumbling through uneven lanes in the centre of dimly lit ruins. According to orders, we carried gas masks in a handy position.

This sector had a nasty reputation when it comes to that sample of Teutonic culture. Fritz's poison shells dropped almost noiselessly and, without a report, broke open, liberating to enormous expansion the inclosed gases. These spread in all directions, and, owing to the lowness

and dampness of the terrain, the poison clouds were imperceptible both to sight or smell. They clung close to the ground to claim unsuspecting victims.

"How are we to know if we are breathing gas or not?" asked the Philadelphia correspondent, Mr. Henri Bazin.

"That's just what you DON'T know," replied the Major.

"Then when will we know it is time to adjust our masks?" Bazin persisted.

"When you see some one fall who has breathed it," the Major said.

"But suppose we breathe it first?"

"Then you won't need a mask," the Major replied, "You see, it's quite simple."

"Halt!" The sharp command, coming sternly but not too loud from somewhere in the adjacent mist, brought the party to a standstill in the open on the edge of the village. We remained notionless while the Major advanced upon command from the unseen. He rejoined us in several minutes with the remark that the challenge had come from one of his old men, and he only hoped the new companies taking over the line that night were as much on their jobs.

"Relief night always is trying," the Major explained. "Fritz always likes to jump the newcomers before they get the lay of the land. He tried it on the last relief, but we burnt him."

While talking the Major was leading the way through the first trench I had ever seen above the surface of the ground. The bottom of the trench was not only on a level with the surrounding terrain, but in some places it was even higher. Its walls, which rose almost to the height of a man's head, were made of large wicker woven cylinders filled with earth and stones.

Our guide informed us that the land which we were

traversing was so low that any trench dug in the ground would simply be a ditch brimful of undrainable water, so that, inasmuch as this position was in the first line system, walls had been built on either side of the path to protect passers-by from shell fragments and indirect machine gun fire. We observed one large break where a shell had entered during the evening.

Farther on, this communicating passage, which was more corridor than trench, reached higher ground and descended into the earth. We reeled through its zig-zag course, staggering from one slanting corner to another.

The sides were fairly well retained by French wicker work, but every eighth or tenth duck board was missing, making it necessary for trench travellers to step knee-deep in cold water or to jump the gap. Correspondent Eyre, who was wearing shoes and puttees, abhorred these breaks.

We passed the Major's post of command, which he used during intense action, and some distance on, entered the front line. With the Major leading, we walked up to a place where two Americans were standing on a firing step with their rifles extended across the parapet. They were silently peering into the grey mist over No Man's Land. One of them looked around as we approached. Apparently he recognised the Major's cane as a symbol of rank. He came to attention.

"Well," the Major said, "is this the way you let us walk up on you? Why don't you challenge me?"

"I saw you was an officer, sir," the man replied.

"Now, you are absolutely sure I am YOUR officer?" the Major said slowly and coldly, with emphasis on the word "your." "Suppose I tell you I am a German officer

and these men behind me are Germans. How do you know?"

With a quick movement the American brought his rifle forward to the challenge, his right hand slapping the wooden butt with an audible whack.

"Advance one, and give the countersign," he said with a changed voice and manner and the Major, moving to within whispering distance, breathed the word over the man's extended bayonet. Upon hearing it, the soldier lowered his gun and stood at attention.

It was difficult to figure whether his relief over the scare was greater than his fears of the censure he knew was coming.

"Next time anybody gets that close to you without being challenged," the Major said, "don't be surprised if it is a German. That's the way they do it. They don't march in singing 'Deutschland Über Alles.'

"If you see them first, you might live through the war. If they see you first, we will have wasted a lot of Liberty bonds and effort trying to make a soldier out of you. Now, remember, watch yourself."

We pushed on encountering longer patches of trench where duck boards were entirely missing and where the wading sometimes was knee-deep. In some places, either the pounding of shells or the thawing out of the ground had pushed in the revetments, appreciably narrowing the way and making progress more difficult. Arriving at an unmanned firing step large enough to accommodate the party, we mounted and took a first look over the top.

Moonlight now was stronger through the mist which hung fold over fold over the forbidden land between the opposing battle lines. At intervals nervous machine guns chattered their ghoulish gibberish or tut-tut-ted away

chidingly like finicky spinsters. Their intermittent sputtering to the right and left of us was unenlightening. We couldn't tell whether they were speaking German or English. Occasional bullets whining somewhere through that wet air gave forth sounds resembling the ripping of linen sheets.

Artillery fire was the exception during the entire night but when a shell did trace its unseen arc through the mist mantle, its echoes gave it the sound of a street car grinding through an under-river tunnel or the tube reverberations of a departing subway train.

We were two hundred yards from the German front lines. Between their trenches and ours, at this point, was low land, so boggy as to be almost impassable. The opposing lines hugged the tops of two small ridges.

Fifty yards in front was our wire barely discernible in the fog. The Major interrupted five wordless reveries by expressing, with what almost seemed regretfulness, the fact that in all his fighting experience he had never seen it "so damn quiet." His observation passed without a remark from us.

The Major appeared to be itching for action and he got into official swing a hundred yards farther on, where a turn in the trench revealed to us the muffled figures of two young Americans, comfortably seated on grenade boxes on the firing step.

From their easy positions they could look over the top and watch all approaches without rising. Each one had a blanket wrapped about his legs and feet. They looked the picture of ease. Without moving, one, with his rifle across his lap, challenged the Major, advanced him, and received the countersign. We followed the Major in time to hear his first remark:

"Didn't they get the rocking chairs out here yet?" he said with the provoked air that customarily accompanies any condemnation of the quartermaster department.

"No, sir," replied the seated sentry. "They didn't get here. The men we relieved said that they never got anything out here."

"Nor the footstools?" the Major continued, this time with an unmistakable tone.

The man didn't answer.

"Do you two think you are taking moon baths on the Riviera?" the Major asked sternly. "You are less than two hundred yards from the Germans. You are all wrapped up like Egyptian mummies. Somebody could lean over the top and snake off your head with a trench knife before you could get your feet loose. Take those blankets off your feet and stand up."

The men arose with alacrity, shedding the blankets and removing the grenade box chairs. The Major continued:

"You know you are not sitting in a club window in Fifth Avenue and watching the girls go by. You're not looking for chickens out there. There's a hawk over there and sometimes he carries off precious little lambs. Now, the next time anybody steps around the corner of that trench, you be on your feet with your bayonet and gun ready to mix things."

The lambs saluted as the Major moved off with a train of followers who, by this time, were beginning to feel that these trenches held other lambs, only they carried notebooks instead of cartridge belts.

Stopping in front of a dugout, the Major gathered us about to hear the conversation that was going on within. Through the cracks of the door, we looked down a flight of steep stairs, dug deep into this battlefield graveyard.

There were lights in the chamber below and the sound of voices came up to us. One voice was singing softly.

"Oh, the infantry, the infantry, with the dirt behind their ears,
The infantry, the infantry, they don't get any beers,
The cavalry, the artillery, and the lousy engineers,
They couldn't lick the infantry in a hundred million years."

"I got a brother in the artillery," came another voice, "but I am ready to disown him. They talk a lot about this counter battery work, but it's all bunk. A battery in position has nice deep dugouts and hot chow all the time. They gets up about 9 o'clock in the morning and shaves up all nice for the day.

" 'Bout 10 o'clock the captain says, 'I guess we will drop a few shells on that German battery on the other side of the hill.' So they pops off forty or fifty rounds in that general direction and don't hit anything 'cause the German battery immediately roots down into its nice, deep dugouts. As soon as our battery lays off and gets back into its holes, the German battery comes out and pops back forty or fifty at 'em and, of course, don't hurt them neither.

"Then it is time for lunch, and while both of these here batteries is eating, they get so sore about not having hit each other during the morning, that they just call off counter battery work for the day and turn their guns on the front lines and blow hell out of the infantry. I haven't got any use for an artilleryman. I'm beginning to think all of them Germans and Allies are alike and has an agreement against the doughboys."

The Major interrupted by rapping sharply on the door.

"Come in," was the polite and innocent invitation guile-

lessly spoken from below. The Major had his helmet on, so he couldn't tear his hair.

"Come up here, you idiots, every one of you."

The Major directed his voice down into the hole in an unmistakable and official tone. There was a scurrying of feet and four men emerged carrying their guns. They were lined up against the trench wall.

"At midnight," the Major began, "in your dugout in the front line forty yards from the Germans, with no sentry at the door, you hear a knock on the door and you shout, 'Come in.' I commend your politeness, and I know that's what your mothers taught you to say when visitors come, but this isn't any tea fight out here. One German could have wiggled over the top here and stood in this doorway and captured all four of you single-handed, or he could have rolled a couple of bombs down that hole and blown all of you to smithereens. What's your aim in life—hard labour in a German prison camp or a nice little wooden cross out here four thousand miles from Punkinville? Why wasn't there any sentry at that door?"

The question remained unanswered but the incident had its effect on the quartet. Without orders, all four decided to spend the remainder of the night on the firing step with their eyes glued on the enemy's line. They simply hadn't realised they were really in the war. The Major knew this, but made a mental reservation of which the commander of this special platoon got full benefit before the night was over.

The front line from here onward followed a small ridge running generally east and west, but now bearing slightly to the northward. We were told the German line ran in the same general direction, but at this point bore to the southward.

The opposing lines in the direction of our course were converging and we were approaching the place where they were the closest in the sector. If German listening posts heard the progress of our party through the line, only a telephone call back to the artillery was necessary to plant a shell among us, as every point on the system was registered.

As we silently considered various eventualities immaterial to the prosecution of the war but not without personal concern, our progress was brought to a sudden standstill.

"Huh-huh-halt!" came a drawn-out command in a husky, throaty stammer, weaker than a whisper, from an undersized tin-hatted youngster planted in the centre of the trench not ten feet in front of us. His left foot was forward and his bayoneted rifle was held ready for a thrust.

"Huh-huh-huh-halt!" came the nervous, whispering command again, although we had been motionless since the first whisper.

We heard a click as the safety catch on the man's rifle lock was thrown off and the weapon made ready to discharge. The Major was watching the nervous hand that rested none too steadily on the trigger stop. He stepped to one side, but the muzzle of the gun followed him.

"Huh-huh-huh-halt! I tuh-tuh-tell you."

This time the whisper vibrated with nervous tension and there was no mistaking the state of mind of the sentry.

"Take it easy," replied the Major with attempted calm. "I'm waiting for you to challenge me. Don't get excited. This is the commanding officer."

"What's the countersign?" came from the voice in a hard strain.

"Troy," the Major said, and the word seemed to bring worlds of reassurance to the rifleman, who sighed with relief, but forgot to move his rifle until the Major said:

"Will you please take that gun off me and put the safety back in?"

The nervous sentry moved the gun six inches to the right and we correspondents, standing in back of the Major, looked into something that seemed as big as the La Salle street tunnel. I jumped out of range behind the Major. Eyre plunged knee-deep into water out of range, and Woods with the rubber boots started to go over the top.

The click of the replaced safety lock sounded unusually like the snap of a trigger, but no report followed and three hearts resumed their beating.

"There is no occasion to get excited," the Major said to the young soldier in a fatherly tone. "I'm glad to see you are wide-awake and on the job. Don't feel any fears for your job and just remember that with that gun and bayonet in your hands you are better than any man who turns that trench corner or crosses out there. You've got the advantage of him, and besides that you are a better man than he is."

The sentry, now smiling, saluted the Major as the latter conducted the party quietly around the trench corner and into a sap leading directly out into No Man's Land. Twice the trench passed under broad belts of barbed wire, which we were cautioned to avoid with our helmets, because any sound was undesirable for obvious reasons.

After several minutes of this cautious advance, we reached a small listening post that marked the closest point in the sector to the German line. Several silent

sentries were crouching on the edge of the pit. Gunny sacks covered the hole and screened it in front and above. We remained silent while the Major in the lowest whisper spoke with a corporal and learned that except for two or three occasions, when the watchers thought they heard sounds near our wire. the night had been calm.

We departed as silently as we came. The German line from a distance of forty yards looked no different from its appearance at a greater distance, but since it was closer, it was carried with a constant tingle of anticipation.

Into another communicating trench and through better walled fortifications of splintered forest, the Major led us to a place where the recent shelling had changed twenty feet of trench into a gaping gulley almost without sides and waist-deep in water. A working detail was endeavouring to repair the damage. In parties of two, we left the trench and crossed an open space on the level. The forty steps we covered across that forbidden ground were like stolen fruit. Such rapture! Bazin, who was seeking a title for a book, pulled "Eureka!"

"Over the top armed with a pencil," he said. "Not bad, eh?"

Back in Seicheprey, just before the Major left us for our long trip back to quarters, he led the way to the entrance of a cemetery, well kept in the midst of surrounding chaos. Graves of French dead ranged row upon row.

"I just wanted to show you some of the fellows that held this line until we took it over," he said simply. "Our own boys that we've lost since we've been here, are buried down in the next village."

We silently saluted the spot as we passed it thirty minutes later.

CHAPTER IX

THE NIGHT OUR GUNS CUT LOOSE

As soon as our forces had made themselves at home in the Toul sector, it was inevitable that belligerent activity would increase and this, in spite of the issuance of strict orders that there should be no development of the normal daily fire. Our men could not entirely resist the temptation to start something.

As was to be expected, the Germans soon began to suspect that they were faced by different troops from the ones who had been confronting them. The enemy set out to verify his suspicions. He made his first raid on the American line.

It was in a dense mist on the morning of January 30th that the Germans lowered a terrific barrage on one of our advance listening posts and then rushed the position with a raiding party outnumbering the defendants ten to one.

Two Americans held that post—five more succeeded in making their way through the storm of falling shells and in coming to the assistance of the first two. That made seven Americans in the fight. When the fighting ceased, every one of the seven had been accounted for in the three items, dead, wounded or captured.

That little handful of Americans, fought, died or were wounded in the positions which they had been ordered to hold. Although the engagement was an extremely minor one, it being the first of its kind on the American sector, it was sufficient to give the enemy some idea of the determination and fighting qualities of the individual Ameri-

can soldier. Their comrades were proud of them, and were inclined to consider the exploit, "Alamo stuff."

Two of the defenders were killed, four were wounded, and one was captured. The wounded men reported that the captured American continued to fight even after being severely wounded. He was the last to remain on his feet and when a bomb blew his rifle from his hand and injured his arm, he succumbed to superior numbers and was carried off by his captors.

After the hurried sortie, the Germans beat a hasty retreat so that the position was reoccupied immediately by another American detail.

The "Alamo" seven had not been taken by surprise. Through a downpour of rather badly placed shells, they held their position on the firing step and worked both their rifles and machine guns against the raiding party, which they could not see, but knew would be advancing behind the curtain of fire. Hundreds of empty cartridges and a broken American bayonet constituted impartial testimony to the fierceness of the fighting. After the first rush, in which the defenders accounted for a number of Germans, the fighting began at close quarters, the enemy peppering the listening post with hand grenades.

In the meantime the German barrage had been lifted and lengthened until it was lowered again between the "Alamo" seven and their comrades in the rear.

There were calls to surrender, but no acceptances. The fighting became hand-to-hand with bayonet and gun butt. The defenders fought on in the hope that assistance soon would arrive from the American artillery.

But the Germans had planned the raid well. Their first barrage cut all telephone wires leading back from our front lines and the signal rocket which one of the men in the listening post had fired into the air, had been smoth-

ered in the dense mist. That rocket had called for a defensive barrage from American artillery and when no answer came to it, a second one was fired, but that also was snuffed out by the fog.

The net result of the raid was that the Germans had captured one of our wounded men and had thereby identified the organisation opposing them as the First Regular Division of the United States Army, composed of the 16th, 18th, 26th, and 28th Regular U. S. Infantry Regiments and the 5th, 6th and 7th Regular U. S. Army Field Artillery. The division was under the command of Major General Robert Lee Bullard.

In the days and weeks that followed, the daily exchange of shells on the sector increased to two and three times the number it had been before our men arrived there. There were nightly patrols in No Man's Land and several instances where these patrols met in the dark and engaged one another with casualties on both sides.

One night a little over a month later—the early morning of March 4th, to be exact—it was my privilege to witness from an exceptional vantage point, the first planned and concentrated American artillery action against the enemy. The German lines selected for this sudden downpour of shell, comprised two small salients jutting out from the enemy's positions in the vicinity of the ruined village of Lahayville, in the same sector.

In company with an orderly who had been despatched as my guide, I started from an artillery battalion headquarters shortly before midnight, and together we made our way up the dark muddy road that led through the dense Bois de la Reine to the battery positions. Half an hour's walk and O'Neil, the guide, led me off the road into a darker tunnel of overlaced boughs where we stumbled along on the ties of a narrow gauge railroad

that conveyed heavy shells from the road to the guns. We passed through several gun pits and stopped in front of a huge *abri* built entirely above ground.

Its walls and roof must have been between five and seven feet thick and were made from layers of logs, sandbags, railroad iron and slabs of concrete reinforced with steel. It looked impenetrable.

"Battery commander's headquarters," O'Neil said to me as we entered a small hot room lighted by two oil lamps and a candle. Three officers, at two large map tables, were working on sheets of figures. Two wooden bunks, one above the other, and two posts supporting the low ceiling completed the meagre furnishings of the room. A young officer looked up from his work, O'Neil saluted, and addressed him.

"The Major sent me up with this correspondent. He said you could let him go wherever he could see the fun and that you are not responsible for his safety." O'Neil caught the captain's smile at the closing remark and withdrew. The captain showed me the map.

"Here we are," he said, indicating a spot with his finger, "and here's what we are aiming at to-night. There are two places you can stay to see the fun. You can stay in this shelter and hear the sound of it, or you can go up a little further front to this point, and mount the platform in our observation tree. In this *abri* you are safe from splinters and shrapnel but a direct hit would wipe us out. In the tree you are exposed to direct hits and splinters from nearby bursts but at least you can see the whole show. It's the highest point around here and overlooks the whole sector."

I sensed that the captain expected a busy evening and looked forward with no joy to possible interference from a questioning visitor, so I chose the tree.

"All right," he said, "you've got helmet and gas masks, I see. Now how's your watch? Take the right time off mine. We have just synchronised ours with headquarters. Zero is one o'clock. You had better start now."

He called for an orderly with a German name, and the two of us left. Before I was out of the room, the captain had returned to his mathematics and was figuring out the latest range variations and making allowances for latest developments in wind, temperature and barometer. The orderly with the German name and I plunged again into the trees and brought up shortly on the edge of a group of men who were standing in the dark near a large tree trunk. I could hear several other men and some stamping horses off to one side.

The party at the foot of the tree was composed of observers, signal linemen and runners. All of them were enlisted men. I inquired who were to be my comrades in the tree top and three presented themselves. One said his name was Pat Guahn, the second gave his as Peter Griffin and the third acknowledged Mike Stanton. I introduced myself and Griffin said, "I see we are all from the same part of Italy."

At twenty minutes to one, we started up the tree, mounting by rudely constructed ladders that led from one to the other of the four crudely fashioned platforms. We reached the top breathless and with no false impressions about the stability of our swaying perch. The tree seemed to be the tallest in the forest and nothing interfered with our forward view. The platform was a bit shaky and Guahn put my thoughts to words and music by softly singing—

"Rock-a-bye baby, in the tree top,
When the shell comes the runners all flop,

When the shell busts, good-bye to our station,
We're up in a tree, bound for damnation."

The compass gives us north and we locate in the forward darkness an approximate sweep of the front lines. Guahn is looking for the flash of a certain German gun and it will be his duty to keep his eyes trained through the fork of a certain marked twig within arm's reach.

"If she speaks, we want to know it," Guahn says; "I can see her from here when she flashes and there's another man who can see her from another place. You see we get an intersection of angles on her and then we know where she is just as though she had sent her address. Two minutes later we drop a card on her and keep her warm."

"Is that that gun from Russia we heard about?" Griffin asks.

"No," answers Guahn, "we are not looking for her from that station. Besides, she isn't Russian. She was made by the British, used by the Russians, captured by the Germans and in turn is used by them against Americans. We have found pieces of her shell and they all have an English trade mark on them. She fires big eight inch stuff."

Griffin is watching in another direction for another flash and Stanton is on the lookout for signal flares and the flash of a signal light projector which might be used in case the telephone communication is disturbed by enemy fire. It is then that the runners at the base of the tree must carry the message back by horse.

Only an occasional thump is heard forward in the darkness. Now and then machine guns chatter insanely as they tuck a seam in the night. At infrequent inter-

vals, a star shell curves upward, bursts, suspends its silent whiteness in mid-air, and dies.

In our tree top all seems quiet and so is the night. There is no moon and only a few stars are out. A penetrating dampness takes the place of cold and there is that in the air that threatens a change of weather.

The illuminated dial of my watch tells me that it is three minutes of one and I communicate the information to the rest of the Irish quartet. In three minutes, the little world that we look upon from our tree top is due to change with terrific suddenness and untold possibilities.

Somewhere below in the darkness and to one side, I hear the clank of a ponderous breech lock as the mechanism is closed on a shell in one of the heavy guns. Otherwise all remains silent.

Two minutes of one. Each minute seems to drag like an hour. It is impossible to keep one's mind off that unsuspecting group of humans out there in that little section of German trench upon which the heavens are about to fall. Griffin leans over the railing and calls to the runners to stand by the horses' heads until they become accustomed to the coming roar.

One minute of one. We grip the railing and wait.

Two flashes and two reports, the barest distinguishable interval, and the black horizon belches red. From extreme left to extreme right the flattened proscenium in front of us glows with the ghastliness of the Broockon.

Waves of light flush the dark vault above like the night sky over South Chicago's blast furnaces. The heavens reflect the glare. The flashes range in colour from blinding yellow to the softest tints of pink. They seem to form themselves from strange combinations of greens and mauves and lavenders.

The sharp shattering crash of the guns reaches our ears almost on the instant. The forest shakes and our tree top sways with the slam of the heavies close by. The riven air whimpers with the husky whispering of the rushing load of metal bolts passing above us.

Looking up into that void, we deny the uselessness of the act and seek in vain to follow the trains of those unseen things that make the air electric with their presence. We hear them coming, passing, going, but see not one of them.

"There's whole blacksmith's shops sailing over our heads on the way to Germany," Pat Guahn shouts in my ear. "I guess the Dutchman sure knows how to call for help. He doesn't care for that first wallop, and he thinks he would like about a half million reserves from the Russian front."

"That darkness out in No Man's Land don't make any hit with him either," Stanton contributes. "He's got it lit up so bright I'm homesick for Broadway."

Now comes the thunder of the shell arrivals. You know the old covered wooden bridges that are still to be found in the country. Have you ever heard a team of horses and a farm wagon thumping and rumbling over such a bridge on the trot?

Multiply the horse team a thousand times. Lash the animals from the trot to the wild gallop. Imagine the sound of their stampede through the echoing wooden structure and you approach in volume and effect the rumble and roar of the steel as it rained down on that little German salient that night.

"Listen to them babies bustin'," says Griffin. "I'm betting them groundhogs is sure huntin' their holes right now and trying to dig clear through to China."

That was the sound and sight of that opening salvo

from all guns, from the small trench mortars in the line, the lightest field pieces behind them, the heavy field pieces about us and the ponderous railroad artillery located behind us.

Its crash has slashed the inkiness in front of us with a lurid red meridian. I don't know how many hands had pulled lanyards on exactly the same instant but the consequent spread of fire looked like one continuous flame.

Now the "seventy-fives" are speaking, not in unison, but at various speeds, limited only by the utmost celerity of the sweating gun crews.

But the German front line is not the only locality receiving unsolicited attention. Enemy gun positions far behind the lines are being plastered with high explosives and anesthetised with gas shells.

So effective is the American artillery neutralisation of the German batteries, that it is between fifteen and twenty minutes before the first enemy gun replies to the terrific barrage. And though expected momentarily, a German counter barrage fails to materialise.

In our tree top we wait for the enemy's counter shelling but the retaliation does not develop. When occupying an exposed position, the suspense of waiting for an impending blow increases in tenseness as the delay continues and the expectations remain unrealised. With no inclination to be unreasonable, one even prays for the speedy delivery of the blow in the same way that the man with the aching tooth urges the dentist to speed up and have it over with.

"Why in hell don't they come back at us?" Griffin asks. "I've had myself all tuned up for the last twenty minutes to have a leg blown off and be thankful. I hate this waiting stuff."

"Keep your shirt on, Pete," Stanton remarks. "Give

'em a chance to get their breath and come out of their holes. That barrage drove 'em down a couple hundred feet into the ground and they haven't any elevators to come up on. We'll hear from 'em soon enough."

We did, but it was not more than a whisper as compared with what they were receiving from our side of the line. The German artillery came into lethargic action after the American barrage had been in constant operation for thirty minutes and then the enemy's fire was only desultory. Only an occasional shell from Kulturland came our way, and even they carried a rather tired, listless buzz, as though they didn't know exactly where they were going and didn't care.

Six or eight of them hummed along a harmless orbit not far above our tree top and fell in the forest. It certainly looked as though we were shooting all the hard-stuff and the German end of the fireworks party was all coloured lights and Roman candles. Of the six shells that passed us, three failed to explode upon landing.

"That makes three dubs," said Guahn.

"You don't mean dubs," Stanton corrected him, "you mean duds and even then you are wrong. Those were gas pills. They just crack open quietly so you don't know it until you've sniffed yourself dead. Listen, you'll hear the gas alert soon."

Even as he spoke, we heard through the firing the throaty gurgling of the sirens. The alarm started on our right and spread from station to station through the woods. We adjusted the respirators and turned our muffled faces toward the firing line. Through the moisture fogged glasses of my mask, I looked first upon my companions on this rustic scaffold above the forest.

War's demands had removed our appearances far from the human. Our heads were topped with uncomfortable

steel casques, harder than the backs of turtles. Our eyes were large, flat, round glazed surfaces unblinking and owl-like. Our faces were shapeless folds of black rubber cloth. Our lungs sucked air through tubes from a canvass bag under our chins and we were inhabiting a tree top like a family of apes. It really required imagination to make it seem real.

"Looks like the party is over," came the muffled remark from the masked figure beside me. The cannonading was dying down appreciably. The blinking line of lights in front of us grew less.

A terrific upward blast of red and green flame from the ground close to our tree, reminded us that one heavy still remained under firing orders. The flash seen through the forest revealed in intricate tracings the intertwining limbs and branches of the trees. It presented the appearance of a piece of strong black lace spread out and held at arm's length in front of a glowing grate.

From the German lines an increased number of flares shot skyward and as the cannon cracks ceased, save for isolated booms, the enemy machine guns could be heard at work, riveting the night with sprays of lead and sounding for all the world like a scourge of hungry woodpeckers.

"God help any of the doughboys that are going up against any of that stuff," Griffin observed through his mask.

"Don't worry about our doughboys," replied Stanton; "they are all safe in their trenches now. That's most likely the reason why our guns were ordered to lay off. I guess Fritzie got busy with his typewriters too late."

I descended the tree, leaving my companions to wait for the orders necessary for their departure. Unfamiliar

with the unmarked paths of the forest and guided only as to general directions, I made my way through the trees some distance in search of the road back from the front.

A number of mud and water-filled shell holes intervened to make the exertion greater and consequently the demand upon lungs for air greater. After floundering several kilometres through a strange forest with a gas mask on, one begins to appreciate the temptation that comes to tear off the stifling nose bag and risk asphyxiation for just one breath of fresh air.

A babel of voices in the darkness to one side guided me to a log cabin where I learned from a sentry that the gas scare had just been called off. Continuing on the road, I collided head on in the darkness with a walking horse. Its rider swore and so did I, with slightly the advantage over him as his head was still encased. I told him the gas alarm was off and he tore away the mask with a sigh of relief. I left him while he was removing the horse's gas mask.

A light snow was beginning to fall as I said good-night to the battalion commander in front of his roadside shack. A party of mounted runners was passing on the way to their quarters. With an admirable lack of dignity quite becoming a national guard cavalry major in command of regular army artillery, he said:

"Good-night, men, we licked hell out of them."

The Toul sector, during its occupation by Americans, always maintained a high daily rating of artillery activity. The opposing forces were continually planning surprises on one another. At any minute of the night or day a terrific bombardment of high explosive or gas might break out on either side. Both sides operated their

sound ranging apparatus to a rather high degree of efficiency.

By these delicate instruments we could locate the exact position of an unseen enemy battery. Following that location, the battery would immediately be visited with a concentrated downpour of hot steel intended to wipe it out of existence. The enemy did as much for us, so that in the artillery, when the men were not actually manning the guns in action, they were digging gun pits for reserve positions which they could occupy if the enemy happened to get the proper range of the old positions. In this casual counter-battery work our artillery adopted a system by which many lives were saved.

If a German battery began shelling one of our battery positions, the artillerymen in that position were not called upon to stand by their guns and return the fire. The order would be given to temporarily abandon the position and the men would be withdrawn a safe distance. The German battery that was firing would be responded to, two to one, by other American batteries located nearby and which did not happen to be under fire at the time. By this system we conserved our strength.

Our infantry was strong in their praise of the artillery. I observed this particularly one day on the Toul front when General Pershing dropped in unexpectedly at the division headquarters, then located in the hillside village of Bourcq. While the commander and his party were awaiting a meal which was being prepared, four muddy figures tramped down the hallway of the Château. Through the doorway the general observed their entrance.

The two leading figures were stolid German soldiers, prisoners of war, and behind them marched their captors, two excusably proud young Americans. One of them carried his bayoneted rifle at the ready, while the second

carried the equipment which had been taken from the prisoners. The American commander ordered the group brought before him and asked one of the Americans to relate the story of the capture.

"We in the infantry got 'em, sir," replied one, "but the artillery deserved most of the credit. It happened just at dawn this morning. Jim here, and myself, were holding down an advance machine gun post when the Germans laid down a flock of shells on our first line trench. We just kept at the gun ready to let them have it if they started to come over.

"Pretty soon we saw them coming through the mist and we began to put it to 'em. I think we got a bunch of them but they kept on coming.

"Then somebody back in our first line shot up the signal for a barrage in our sector. It couldn't have been a minute before our cannon cut loose and the shells began to drop right down in the middle of the raiding party.

"It was a good heavy barrage, sir, and it cut clean through the centre of the raiders. Two Germans were ahead of the rest and the barrage landed right in back of them. The rest started running back toward their lines, but the first pair could not go back because they would have had to pass through the barrage. I kept the machine gun going all the time and Jim showed himself above the trench and pointed his rifle at the cut-off pair.

"They put up their hands right quick and we waved to 'em to come in. They took it on the jump and landed in our trench as fast as they could. We took their equipment off them and we were ordered to march them back here to headquarters. That's all there was to it, sir."

The enemy in front of Toul manifested an inordinate anxiety to know more about the strength of our forces and the character of the positions we occupied. A cap-

tured German document issued to the Fifth Bavarian Landwehr infantry brigade instructed every observer and patrol to do his or its best "to bring information about the new enemy."

"Nothing is known as yet about the methods of fighting or leadership," the document set forth, "and all information possible must be gathered as to particular features of American fighting and outpost tactics. This will then be used for extending the information bulletin. Any observation or identification, however insignificant, may be of the greatest value."

The document directed that data on the following questions be obtained:

"Are sentry posts sentry posts or stronger posts? Further advanced reconnoitring patrols? Manner of challenging? Behaviour on post during day and night? Vigilance? Ambush tactics and cunning?

"Do they shoot and signal on every occasion? Do the posts hold their ground on the approach of a patrol, or do they fall back?

"Are the Americans careful and cautious? Are they noisy? What is their behaviour during smoke screens?"

The enemy's keen desire to acquire this information was displayed in the desperate efforts it made. One day the French troops occupying the trenches on the right flank of the American sector, encountered a soldier in an American uniform walking through their positions.

He was stopped and questioned. He said he had been one of an American patrol that had gone out the night before, that he had lost his way in No Man's Land and that he thought he was returning to his own trenches, when he dropped into those held by the French.

Although the man wore our uniform and spoke excellent English and seemed straightforward in his replies,

as to his name and rank and organisation, the French officer before whom he was brought was not completely satisfied. To overcome this hesitancy, the suspected man opened his shirt and produced an American identification tag verifying his answers.

The French officer, still suspicious, ordered the man held while he telephoned to the American organisation mentioned to ascertain whether any man of the name given was missing from that unit.

"Yes," replied the American captain. "We lost him last October, when we were in the front line down in the Luneville sector. He was captured with eight others by the Germans."

"Well, we've got him over here on your right flank. He came into our lines this morning—" the French officer started to say.

"Bully," came the American interruption over the wire. "He's escaped from the Germans and has come clear through their lines to get back to his company. He'll get a D. S. C. for that. We'll send right over for him."

"But when we questioned him," replied the Frenchman, "he said he left your lines only last night on patrol and got lost in No Man's Land."

"I'll come right over and look at that party, myself," the American captain hastily replied.

He reached the French officer's dugout several hours later and the suspect was ordered brought in.

"He must be crazy, sir," the French orderly said. "He tried to kill himself a few minutes ago and we have had to hold him."

The man was brought into the dugout between two poilus who held his arms. The American captain took a careful look and said:

"That's not our man. He wears our uniform correctly

and that's our regulation identification tag. Both of them must have been taken away from our man when he was captured. This man is an impostor."

"He's more than that," replied the Frenchman with a smile. "He's a German spy."

The prisoner made no reply, but later made a full confession of his act, and also gave to his interrogators much valuable information, which, however, did not save him from paying the penalty in front of a firing squad. When he faced the rifles, he was not wearing the stolen uniform.

CHAPTER X

INTO PICARDY TO MEET THE GERMAN PUSH

Toward the end of March, 1918, just at the time when the American Expeditionary Forces were approaching the desired degree of military effectiveness, the fate of civilisation was suddenly imperilled by the materialisation of the long expected German offensive.

This push, the greatest the enemy had ever attempted, began on March 21st, and the place that Hindenburg selected for the drive was Picardy, the valley of the Somme, the ancient cockpit of Europe. On that day the German hordes, scores upon scores of divisions, hurled themselves against the British line between Arras and Noyon.

Before that tremendous weight of manpower, the Allied line was forced to give and one of the holding British armies, the Fifth, gave ground on the right flank, and with its left as a hinge, swung back like a gate, opening the way for the Germans toward Paris.

There have been many descriptions of the fierce fighting put up by the French and British to stem the German advance, but the most interesting one that ever came to my notice, came from one of the few American soldiers that participated in the defence. Two weeks after the opening of the battle and at a time when the German advance had been stopped, I came upon this American in a United States Military Hospital at Dijon.

An interne led me to the bedside of Jimmy Brady, a former jockey from the Pimlico turf in Baltimore, and now a proud wearer of Uncle Sam's khaki. In his own

quaint way, Jimmy told me the story of what a little handful of Americans did in the great battle in Picardy. Jimmy knew. Jimmy had been there.

"Lad," he said, "I'm telling you it was a real jam. I learned one hell of a headful in the last ten days that I'll not be forgetting in the next ten years. I've got new ideas about how long this war is goin' to last. Of course, we're going to lick the Boches before it ends, but I've sorter given up the picture I had of myself marching up Fifth Avenue in a victory parade on this coming Fourth of July. I'll say it can't be done in that time.

"Our outfit from old —— engineers, and believe me there's none better, have been working up in the Somme country for the last two months. We were billeted at Brie and most of our work had been throwing bridges across the Canal du Nord about three miles south of Peronne. I'm telling you the Somme ain't a river. It's a swamp, and they just hardly squeeze enough water outer it to make a canal which takes the place of a river.

"We was working under the British. Their old bridges over the canal were wooden affairs and most of them had signs on them reading, 'This bridge won't hold a tank,' and that bridge wouldn't bear trotting horses, and so on. Some of 'em we tore down must have been put in for scenery purposes only. We were slamming up some husky looking steel structures like you see in the States, and believe me it makes me sick to think that we had to blow 'em all up again before the Boches got to 'em.

"I see by the papers that the battle began on the 21st, but I've got no more idea about the date of it than the King of Honolulu. They say it's been on only about ten days, but I couldn't swear it hadn't been on since New Year's Eve. It sure seemed a long time. As I told you, we were working just south of Peronne on the main road

between St. Quentin and Amiens. She started on a foggy morning and for two days the music kept getting closer. On the first day, all traffic was frontward, men, guns, and camions going up towards the lines, and then the tide began to flow back.

"Ambulances and camions, full of poor wounded devils, filled the road, and then came labour battalions of chattering Chinks, Egyptians, and Fiji Islanders and God knows what. None of these birds were lingering, because the enemy was sprinkling the roads with shells and sorter keeping their marching spirits up. Orders came for us to ditch our packs and equipment all except spades, rifles, belts and canteens, and we set off toward the rear.

"Do you mind your map of the Somme? Well, we pulls up at Chaulnes for a breath. It was a big depot and dump town—aeroplanes and everything piled up in it. We were ordered onto demolition work, being as we was still classed as non-combatants. I don't know how many billions of dollars' worth of stuff we blew up and destroyed, but it seemed to me there was no end of it. Fritz kept coming all the time and they hiked us on to Aubercourt and then to Dormant, and each place we stopped and dug trenches, and then they shoots us into camions and rushes us north to a town not far out of Amiens.

"With about forty men, we marched down the road, this time as non-combatants no longer. We stopped just east of the village of Marcelcave and dug a line of trenches across the road. We had twenty machine guns and almost as many different kinds of ammunition as there was different nationalities in our trench. Our position was the fifth line of defence, we was told, but the

guns kept getting closer and a lot of that long range stuff was giving us hell. Near me there was a squad of my men, one Chink, three Canadians, and we two Dublin fusileers.

"Then we begin to see our own guns, that is, British guns, beginning to blow hell out of this here village of Marcelcave right in front of us. It made me wild to see the artillery making a mistake like that, so I says to one of these here Dublin fusileers:

" 'Whatinell's 'matter wid dose guns firing on our own men up there in the village? If this is the fifth line, then that must be our fourth line in the village?'

" 'Lad,' says the Dublin fusileer to me, 'I don't want to discourage you for the life of me, but this only used to be the fifth line. We are in the first line now and it's up to you and me and the Chink and the rest of us to keep the Fritzes out of Amiens. At this moment we are all that's between.'

"We started to the machine guns and began pouring it in on 'em. The minute some of 'em would start out of the town we would wither them. Holy mother, but what a beautiful murder it was!

"I didn't know then, and don't know yet, what has become of all the rest of our officers and men, but I sorter felt like every shot I sent over was paying 'em back for some of their dirty work. We kept handing it to 'em hot. You oughter seen that Chink talking Mongolian to a machine gun, and, believe me, he sure made it understand him. I'm here to say that when a Chink fights, he's a fighting son-of-a-gun and don't let anybody kid you different.

"Well, our little mob held 'em off till dark and then British Tommies piled in and relieved us. We needed it because we hadn't had a bite in seventy hours and I

had been lying in the mud and water for twice that time. Just before relief comes on, two skulking figures comes over the top. I was thinking that maybe these was Hindus or Eskimos coming to join our little international party and we shouts out to 'em and asks 'em where they hails from. Both of 'em yelled back, 'Kamerad,' and then I knew that we'd not only held the fort, but had captured two prisoners even if they was deserters.

"I marched 'em back that night to the next town and took 'em into a grocery store, where there was a lot of Tommies helping themselves to the first meal in days. While we were eating bread and cheese and sardines and also feeding me two prisoners, we talks to them and finds out that, as far as they are concerned, the Kaiser will never get their vote again.

"One Tommy says to one of my prisoners: 'Kaiser no good—pas bon, ain't it?' and the prisoner said, 'Yah,' and I shoved my elbow into his ribs and right quick he said, 'Nein.' Then the Tommy said: 'Hindenburg dirty rotter, nacy pa?' and the Fritz said, 'Yah. Nein,' and then looked at me and said 'Yah' again. They was not bad prisoners and I marched 'em twenty miles that night, just the three of us—two of them in front and me in back with the rifle over me arm.

"And the joke of it was that both of them could have taken the gun and killed me any minute for all I could have done."

"How do you figure that, Corporal?" I asked.

For reply, Jimmy Brady drew from beneath the blankets a pair of knotted hands with fingers and thumbs stiffened and bent in and obviously impossible to use on a trigger. Brady is not in the hospital for wounds. Four days and nights in water and mud in the battle of

battles had twisted and shrunken him with rheumatism. But he is one rheumatic who helped to save Amiens.

Upon the heels of the German successes in Picardy, developments followed fast. Principal among these, was the materialisation of a unified command of all the armies of the Allies. General Ferdinand Foch was selected and placed in supreme command of every fighting man under the Allied flags.

One of the events that led up to this long delayed action, was the unprecedented action of General Pershing, when he turned over the command of all the American forces in France to General Foch. He did this with the words:

"I come to say to you that the American people would hold it a great honour for our troops were they engaged in the present battle. I ask it of you in my name and in that of the American people.

"There is at this moment no other question than that of fighting. Infantry, artillery, aviation—all that we have are yours to dispose of as you will. Others are coming which are as numerous as will be necessary. I have come to say to you that the American people would be proud to be engaged in the greatest battle in history."

The action met with the unqualified endorsement of every officer and man in the American forces. From that minute on, the American slogan in France was "Let's go," and every regiment began to hope that it would be among the American organisations selected to do battle with the German in Picardy. Secretary of War Baker, then in France, expressed his pleasure over

General Pershing's unselfish offer with the following public statement on Mar. 30th:

"I am delighted with the prompt and effective action of General Pershing in placing all American troops at the disposal of the Allies in the present situation. His action will meet with hearty approval in the United States, where the people desire their Expeditionary Force to be of the utmost service to the common cause.

"I have visited practically all the American troops in France, some of them quite recently, and had an opportunity to observe the enthusiasm with which the officers and men receive the announcement that they may be used in the present conflict. Regiments to which the announcement was made, broke spontaneously into cheers."

Particularly were there cheers when the news spread through the ranks of the First United States division, then on duty on the line in front of Toul, that it had been the first American division chosen to go into Picardy. I was fortunate enough to make arrangements to go with them.

I rode out from old positions with the guns and boarded the troop train which took our battery by devious routes to changes of scenery, gratifying both to vision and spirit. We lived in our cars on tinned meat and hard bread, washed down with swallows of *vin ordinaire,* hurriedly purchased at station *buvettes.* The horses rode well.

Officers and men, none of us cared for train schedule simply because none of us knew where we were going, and little time was wasted in conjecture. Soldierly curiosity was satisfied with the knowledge that we were

on our way, and with this satisfaction, the hours passed easily. In fact, the blackjack game in the officers' compartment had reached the point where the battery commander had garnered almost all of the French paper money in sight, when our train passed slowly through the environs of Paris.

Other American troop trains had preceded us, because where the railroad embankment ran close and parallel to the street of some nameless Faubourg, our appearance was met with cheers and cries from a welcoming regiment of Paris street gamins, who trotted in the street beside the slow moving troop train and shouted and threw their hats and wooden shoes in the air. Sous and fifty centime pieces and franc pieces showered from the side doors of the horses' cars as American soldiers, with typical disregard for the value of money, pitched coin after coin to the scrambling mob of children. At least a hundred francs must have been cast out upon those happy, romping waves of childish faces and upstretched dirty hands.

"A soldier would give his shirt away," said a platoon commander, leaning out of the window and watching the spectacle, and surreptitiously pitching a few coins himself. "Hope we get out of this place before the men pitch out a gun or a horse to that bunch. Happy little devils, aren't they? It's great to think we are on our way up to meet their daddies."

Unnumbered hours more passed merrily in the troop train before we were shunted into the siding of a little town. Work of unloading was started and completed within an hour. Guns and wagons were unloaded on the quay, while the animals were removed from the cars on movable runways or ramps. As each gun or wagon reached the ground, its drivers hitched in the

horses and moved it away. Five minutes later we rode out of the yards and down the main street of the town.

Broad steel tires on the carriages of the heavies bumped and rumbled over the clean cobbles and the horses pranced spryly to get the kinks out of their legs, long fatigued from vibrations of the train. Women, old and young, lined the curbs, smiling and throwing kisses, waving handkerchiefs and aprons and begging for souvenirs. If every request for a button had been complied with, our battery would have reached the front with a shocking shortage of safety pins.

Darkness came on and with it a fine rain, as we cleared the town and halted on a level plain between soft fields of tender new wheat, which the horses sensed and snorted to get at. In twenty minutes, Mess Sergeant Kelly, from his high altar on the rolling kitchen, announced that the last of hot coffee had been dispensed. Somewhere up ahead in the darkness, battery bugle notes conveyed orders to prepare to mount. With the rattle of equipment and the application of endearing epithets, which horses unfortunately don't understand, we moved off at the sound of "forward."

Off on our left, a noiseless passenger train slid silently across the rim of the valley, blue dimmed lights in its coach windows glowing like a row of wet sulphur matches. Far off in the north, flutters of white light flushed the night sky and an occasional grumbling of the distant guns gave us our first impression of the battle of battles. Every man in our battery tingled with the thrill. This was riding frontward with the guns—this was rolling and rumbling on through the night up toward the glare and glamour of war. I was riding beside the captain at the head of the column. He broke silence.

"It seems like a far cry from Honolulu with the moon playing through the palm trees on the beach," he said quizzically, "to this place and these scenes and events to-night, but a little thing like a flip of coin decided it for me, and I'm blessing that coin to-night.

"A year ago January, before we came into the war, I was stationed at San Antonio. Another officer friend of mine was stationed there and one day he received orders to report for duty at Honolulu. He had a girl in San Antonio and didn't want to leave her and he knew I didn't have a girl and didn't give a damn where I went, or was sent, so long as it was with the army. He put up the proposition of mutual exchange being permitted under regulations.

"He wanted to take my place in San Antonio and give me his assignment in Honolulu, which I must say looked mighty good in those days to anybody who was tired of Texas. I didn't think then we'd ever come to war and besides it didn't make much difference to me one way or the other where I went. But instead of accepting the proposition right off the reel, I told Jim we'd flip a coin to decide.

"If it came tails, he would go to Honolulu. If it came heads, I would go to Honolulu. He flipped. Tails won. I'm in France and poor Jim is out there in Honolulu tending the Ukelele crop with prospects of having to stay there for some time. Poor devil, I got a letter from him last week.

"Do you know, man knows no keener joy in the world than that which I have to-night. Here I am in France at the head of two hundred and fifty men and horses and the guns and we're rolling up front to kick a dent in history. The poor unfortunate that ain't in this fight has

almost got license to shoot himself. Life knows no keener joy than this."

It was a long speech for our captain, but his words expressed not only the feeling of our battery, but our whole regiment, from the humblest wagon driver up to the colonel who, by the way, has just made himself most unpopular with the regiment by being promoted to a Brigadier Generalship. The colonel is passing upward to a higher command and the regiment is sore on losing him. One of his humblest critics has characterised the event as the "first rough trick the old man ever pulled."

Midnight passed and we were still wheeling our way through sleeping villages, consulting maps under rays of flashlights, gathering directions some of the time from mile posts and wall signs, and at other times gaining knowledge of roads and turns and hills from sleepy heads in curl wrappers that protruded from bedroom chambers and were over-generous in advice.

The animals were tired. Rain soaked the cigarettes and made them draw badly. Above was drizzle and below was mud. There were a few grumbles, but no man in our column would have traded places with a brother back home even if offered a farm to boot.

It was after three in the morning when we parked the guns in front of a château, brought forward some lagging combat wagons and discovered the rolling kitchen had gone astray. In another hour the animals had been unhitched but not unharnessed, fed and watered in darkness and the men, in utter weariness, prepared to lie down and sleep anywhere. At this juncture, word was passed through the sections that the battery would get ready to move immediately. Orders were to clear the village by six o'clock. Neither men

nor horses were rested, but we moved out on time and breakfasted on the road.

The way seemed long, the roads bad and the guns heavy. But we were passing through an Eden of beauty —green fields and rolling hills crested by ancient châteaux. At times, the road wound down through hillside orchards, white and pink with apple blooms. Fatigue was heavy on man and beast, but I heard one walking cannoneer singing, "When It's Apple Blossom-time in Normandie." Another rider in the column recalled the time when his father used to give him ten cents for standing on the bottom of an upturned tin basin and reciting, "Over the mountains winding down, horse and foot into Frederickstown."

"The jar of these guns as they grind over the gravel is enough to grind the heart out of you," said a sweating cannoneer who was pressing a helping shoulder to one of the heavies as we negotiated a steep hill.

"What in hell you kicking about," said the man opposite. "Suppose you was travelling with one of them guns the Germans are using on Paris—I mean that old John J. Longdistance. You'd know what heavy guns are then. They say that the gun's so big and takes so many horses to haul it, that the man who drives the lead pair has never spent the night in the same town with the fellow who rides wheel swing."

A young reserve lieutenant with mind intensely on his work, combined for my benefit his impressions of scenery with a lesson in artillery location. His characterisation of the landscape was as technical as it was unpoetical.

"A great howitzer country," was the tenor of his remarks. "Look at the bottom of that slide. Fine position for one fifty-five. Take that gully over there.

That's a beaut of a place. No use talking. Great howitzer country."

During the afternoon, a veterinarian turned over two horses to a French peasant. One was exhausted and unable to proceed, and the other suffered a bad hoof, which would require weeks for healing. News that both animals were not going to be shot was received with joy by two men who had ridden them. I saw them patting the disabled mounts affectionately on the neck and heard one of them say,

" 'Salright, old timer—'salright. Frenchy here is going to take care of you all right. Uncle Sam's paying the bill and I am coming back and get you soon's we give Fritzie his bumps."

An hour later, a young cannoneer gave in to fatigue and ignored orders to the extent of reclining on gun trail and falling asleep. A rut in the road made a stiff jolt, he rolled off and one ponderous wheel of the gun carriage passed over him. One leg, one arm and two ribs were broken and his feet crushed, was the doctor's verdict as the victim was carried away in an ambulance.

"He'll get better all right," said the medico, "but he's finished his bit in the army."

The column halted for lunch outside of a small town and I climbed on foot to the hilltop castle where mediæval and modern were mixed in mute mélange. A drawbridge crossed a long dry moat to cracked walls of rock covered with ivy. For all its well preserved signs of artistic ruin, it was occupied and well fitted within. From the topmost parapet of one rickety looking tower, a wire stretched out through the air to an old, ruined mill which was surmounted by a modern wind motor, the tail of which incongruously advertised the words

"Ideal power," with the typical conspicuity of American salesmanship.

Near the base of the old mill was another jumble of moss-covered rocks, now used as a summer house, but open on all sides. At a table in the centre of this open structure, sat a blond haired young American soldier with black receivers clamped to either ear. I approached and watched him jotting down words on a paper pad before him. After several minutes of intent silence, he removed the harness from his head and told me that he belonged to the wireless outfit with the artillery and this station had been in operation since the day before.

"Seems so peaceful here with the sun streaming down over these old walls," he said.

"What do you hear out of the air?" I asked.

"Oh, we pick up a lot of junk," he replied, "I'm waiting for the German communiqué now. Here's some Spanish stuff I just picked up and some more junk in French. The English stations haven't started this afternoon. A few minutes ago I heard a German aeroplane signalling by wireless to a German battery and directing its fire. I could tell every time the gun was ordered to fire and every time the aviator said the shot was short or over. It's kinder funny to sit back here in quiet and listen in the war, isn't it?" I agreed it was weird and it was.

In darkness again at the end of a hard day on the road, we parked the guns that night in a little village which was headquarters for our regiment and where I spent the night writing by an old oil lamp in the Mayor's office. A former Chicago bellhop who spoke better Italian than English and naturally should, was sleeping on a blanket roll on the floor near me. On the walls of the room were posted numerous flag-decked proclama-

tions, some now yellow with the time that had passed over them since their issue back in 1914. They pertained to the mobilisation of the men of the village, men whose names remain now only as a memory.

But in their place was the new khaki-clad Chicago bellhop snoring there on the floor and several thousand more as sturdy and ready as he, all billeted within a stone's throw of that room. They were here to finish the fight begun by those village peasants who had marched away four years before when the Mayor of the town posted that bulletin. These Americans stood ready to go down to honoured graves beside them.

Our division was under the French high command and was buried in the midst of the mighty preparations then on foot. Our ranks were full, our numbers strong, our morale high. Every officer and man in the organisation had the feeling that the eyes of dashing French comrades-in-arms and hard fighting British brothers were on them. Our inspiration was in the belief that the attention of the Allied nations of the world and more particularly the hope and pride of our own people across the sea, was centred upon us. With that sacred feeling, the first division stood resolute to meet the test.

Some of the disquieting news then prevalent in the nervous civilian areas back of the lines, reached us, but its effect, as far as I could see, was nil. Our officers and men were as unconcerned about the reports of enemy successes as though we were children in the nursery of a burning house and the neighbourhood was ringing with fire alarms. German advances before Amiens, enemy rushes gaining gory ground in Flanders, carried no shock to the high resolve that existed in the Allied reserves of which we were a part.

Our army knew nothing but confidence. If there was

other than optimism to be derived from the current events, then our army was inclined to consider such a result as gratifying, because it could be calculated to create a greater measure of speed and assistance from the slowly functioning powers in America. The reasoning was that any possible pessimism would hurry to the wheel every American shoulder that had failed to take up its individual war burden under the wave of optimism. The army had another reason for its optimism. Our officers knew something about the dark days that had preceded the first battle at the Marne. They were familiar with the gloomy outlook in 1914 that had led to the hurried removal of the French government from Paris to Bordeaux. Our men recalled how the enemy was then overrunning Belgium, how the old British "Contemptibles" were in retreat, and how the German was within twenty miles of the French capital.

In that crisis had come the message by Foch and the brilliant stroke with which he backed it up. What followed was the tumble and collapse of the straddling German effort and the forced transformation in the enemy's plans from a war of six weeks to a war of four years.

Our army knew the man who turned the trick at the Marne. We knew that we were under his command, and not the slightest doubt existed but that it was now our destiny to take part in another play of the cards which would call and cash the German hand. Our forces in the coming engagements were staking their lives, to a man, on Foch's ace in the hole.

That was the deadly earnestness of our army's confidence in Foch. The capture of a hill top in Picardy or the loss of a village in Flanders had no effect upon that confidence. It found reinforcement in the belief

that since March 21st, America had gained a newer and keener appreciation of her part in the war.

Our army began to feel that the American people, more than three thousand miles away from the battle fronts, would have a better understanding of the intense meaning that had been already conveyed in General Pershing's words, "Confidence is needed but overconfidence is dangerous." In other words, our soldiers in the field began to feel that home tendencies that underrated the enemy's strength and underestimated the effort necessary to overcome him, had been corrected. The army had long felt that such tendencies had made good material for Billy Sunday's sermons and spread-eagle speeches, but they hadn't loaded guns or placed men in the front line.

We felt that this crisis had brought to America a better realisation of the fact that Germany had not been beaten and that she was yet to be beaten and that America's share in the administration of that beating would have to be greater and more determined than had heretofore been deemed necessary. It was the hope of the army that this realisation would reach the people with a shock. Shocks were known to make realisations less easy to forget. Forgetfulness from then on might have meant Allied defeat.

Lagging memories found no billet in the personnel of that First Division. Its records, registering five hundred casualties, kept in mind the fact that the division had seen service on the line and still had scores to settle with the enemy.

Its officers and men, with but few exceptions, had undergone their baptism in German fire and had found the experience not distasteful. The division had esprit which made the members of every regiment and brigade

in it vie with the members of any other regiment and brigade. If you had asked any enlisted man in the division, he would have told you that his company, battery, regiment or brigade "had it all over the rest of them."

That was the feeling that our division brought with them when we marched into Picardy to meet the German push. That was the spirit that dominated officers and men during the ten days that we spent in manœuvres and preparations in that concentration area in the vicinity of the ancient town of Chaumont-en-Vexin in the department of the Oise. It was the feeling that made us anxious and eager to move on up to the actual front.

CHAPTER XI

UNDER FIRE

On the day before our departure for the front from the concentration area in Picardy, every officer in the division, and they numbered almost a thousand, was summoned to the temporary divisional headquarters, where General Pershing addressed to them remarks which have since become known as the commander's "farewell to the First." We had passed out from his command and from then on our orders were to come from the commander of the French army to which the division was to be attached.

General Pershing stood on a mound at the rear of a beautiful château of Norman architecture, the Château du Jard, located on the edge of the town of Chaumont-en-Vexin. The officers ranged themselves in informal rows on the grass. Birds were singing somewhere above in the dense, green foliage, and sunlight was filtering through the leaves of the giant trees.

The American commander spoke of the traditions which every American soldier should remember in the coming trials. He referred to the opportunity then present for us, whose fathers established liberty in the New World, now to assist the Old World in throwing off its yoke of tyranny. Throughout this touching farewell to the men he had trained—to his men then leaving for scenes from which some of them would never return—the commander's voice never betrayed the depth of feeling behind it.

That night we made final arrangements for the mor-

row's move. I travelled with the artillery where orders were received for the reduction of all packs to the lightest possible as all men would be dismounted and the baggage wagons would be reserved for food, ammunition and officers' luggage only. Officers' packs, by the same order, had to shrink from one hundred and fifty pounds to twenty.

There were many misgivings that night as owners were forced to discard cherished belongings. Cumbersome camp paraphernalia, rubber bathtubs, pneumatic mattresses, extra blankets, socks, sweaters, etc., all parted company from erstwhile owners. That order caused many a heart-break and the abandonment of thousands of dollars' worth of personal equipment in our area.

I have no doubt that some of the village maidens were surprised at the remarkable generosity of officers and men who presented them with expensive toilet sets. Marie at the village *estaminet* received five of them all fitted in neat leather rolls and inscribed with as many different sets of initials. The old men of the town gloried in the sweaters, woollen socks and underwear.

There was no chance to fudge on the slim baggage order. An officer, bound by duty, weighed each officer's kit as it reached the baggage wagons and those tipping the scales at more than the prescribed twenty pounds, were thrown out entirely. I happened to be watching the loading when it came turn for the regimental band to stow away its encased instruments in one wagon. It must be remembered that musicians at the front are stretcher bearers. The baggage judge lifted the case containing the bass horn.

"No horn in the world ever weighed that much," he said. "Open it up," was the terse command. The case was opened and the base horn pulled out. The baggage

officer began operations on the funnel. I watched him remove from the horn's interior two spare blankets, four pairs of socks, an extra pair of pants and a carton of cigarettes. He then inserted his arm up to the shoulder in the instrument's innards and brought forth two apples, a small tin of blackberry jam and an egg wrapped in an undershirt.

The man who played the "umpah umpah" in the band was heartbroken. The clarinet player, who had watched the operation and whose case followed for inspection, saved the inspector trouble by removing an easily hidden chain of sausage. I noticed one musician who was observing the ruthless pillage but, strangely, his countenance was the opposite of the others. He was actually smiling. I inquired the cause of his mirth.

"When we packed up, those guys with the big hollow instruments all had the laugh on me," he said. "Now I've got it on them. I play the piccolo."

All the mounted men under the rank of battery commanders were dismounted in order to save the horses for any possibilities in the war of movement. A dismounted artilleryman carrying a pack and also armed with a rifle, is a most disconsolate subject to view just prior to setting out for a long tramp. In his opinion, he has been reduced too near the status of the despised doughboy.

It really doesn't seem like artillery unless one has a horse to ride and a saddle to strap one's pack on. In the lineup before we started, I saw two of these gunners standing by weighted down with their cumbersome, unaccustomed packs. They were backed against a stone wall and were easing their burdens by resting the packs on the stone ledge. Another one similarly burdened passed and, in a most serious tone, inquired:

"Say, would either of you fellows like to buy another blanket roll?" The reply of two dejected gunners would bar this story from publication.

We were on the march early in the morning, but not without some initial confusion by reason of the inevitable higher orders which always come at the last minute to change programmes. On parallel roads through that zone of unmarred beauty which the Normans knew, our columns swung along the dusty highroads.

There were many who held that America would not be thoroughly awake to the full meaning of her participation in the war until the day there came back from the battlefields a long list of casualties—a division wiped out or decimated. Many had heard the opinions expressed in France and many firmly believed that nothing short of such a shock would arouse our nation to the exertion of the power and speed necessary to save the Allied cause from defeat.

On this march, that thought recurred to some and perhaps to many who refrained soberly from placing it in words. I knew several in the organisation who felt that we were on our way to that sacrifice. I can not estimate in how many minds the thought became tangible, but among several whom I heard seriously discussing the matter, I found a perfect willingness on their part to meet the unknown—to march on to the sacrifice with the feeling that if the loss of their life would help bring about a greater prosecution of the war by our country, then they would not have died in vain.

If this was the underlying spirit, it had no effect whatever upon outward appearances which could hardly be better described than with Cliff Raymond's lilting words: "There are roses in their rifles just the same." If this move was on to the sacrifice—if death awaited at

the end of the road, then those men were marching toward it with a song.

It takes a hard march to test the morale of soldiers. When the feet are road-sore, when the legs ache from the endless pounding of hobnails on hard macadam, when the pack straps cut and burn to the shoulder blades, and the tin hat weighs down like a crown of thorns, then keep your ear open for a jest and if your hearing is rewarded, you will know that you march with men.

Many times that first day, those jests came to enliven dejected spirits and put smiles on sweat-rinsed faces. I recall our battery as it negotiated the steep hills. When the eight horses attached to the gun carriages were struggling to pull them up the incline, a certain subaltern with a voice slow, but damnably insistent, would sing out, "Cannoneers, to the wheels." This reiterated command at every grade forced aching shoulders already weary with their own burdens to strain behind the heavy carriages and ease the pull on the animals.

Once on a down grade, our way crossed the tracks of a narrow gauge railroad. Not far from the crossing could be seen a dinky engine puffing and snorting furiously in terrific effort to move up the hill its attached train of loaded ammunition cars. The engine was having a hard fight when some light-hearted weary one in our column gave voice to something which brought up the smile.

"Cannoneers, to the wheel!" was the shout and even the dignified subaltern whose pet command was the butt of the exclamation, joined in the wave of laughs that went down the line.

An imposing château of the second empire now presided over by an American heiress, the wife of a French officer, was regimental headquarters that night. Its

barns and outbuildings were the cleanest in France according to individuals who had slept in so many barns that they feel qualified to judge.

"Painfully sanitary," said a young lieutenant, who remarked that the tile floor might make a stable smell sweeter but it hardly offered the slumbering possibilities of a straw shakedown. While the men arranged their blankets in those quarters, the horses grazed and rolled in green paddocks fenced with white painted rails. The cooks got busy with the evening meal and the men off duty started exploring the two nearby villages.

For the American soldier, financial deals were always a part of these explorations. It was seldom more than an hour after his arrival in a populated village before the stock market and board of trade were in full operation. These mobile establishments usually were set up in the village square if headquarters did not happen to be located too close. There were plenty to play the rôles of bulls and bears; there was much bidding and shouting of quotations.

The dealings were not in bushels of wheat or shares in oils or rails. Delicacies were the bartered commodities and of these, eggs were the strongest. The German intelligence service could have found no surer way to trace the perigrinations of American troops about France, than to follow up the string of eggless villages they left behind them.

As soon as billets were located, those without extra duty began the egg canvass of the town. There was success for those who made the earliest start and struck the section with the most prolific hens. Eggs were bought at various prices before news of the American arrivals had caused peasants to set up a new scale of charges. The usual late starter and the victim of ar-

rangements was the officer's striker who lost valuable time by having to take care of his officer's luggage and get the latter established in billets. It was then his duty to procure eggs for the officer's mess.

By that time, all natural egg sources had been obliterated and the only available supply was cornered by the soldiers' board of trade. The desired breakfast food could be obtained in that place only. It was the last and only resort of the striker, who is euphoniously known as a dog robber. In the board of trade he would find soldiers with helmets full of eggs which could be bought at anywhere from two to three times their original price. It was only by the payment of such prices that the officer was able to get anything that could possibly leave a trace of yellow on his chin. If there was a surplus, the soldiers themselves had ample belt room to accommodate it.

In one village tavern, I saw one soldier eat fourteen eggs which he ordered Madame to fry in succession. I can believe it because I saw it. Madame saw it also, but I feel that she did not believe her eyes. A captain of the Judge Advocate's office also witnessed the gastronomic feat.

"Every one of those eggs was bought and paid for," he said. "Our department handles claims for all stolen or destroyed property and we have yet to receive the first claim from this town. Of course every one knows that a hungry man will steal to eat and there are those who hold that theft for the purpose of satisfying demands of the stomach is not theft. But our records show that the American soldier in France is ready to, willing to, and capable of buying what he needs outside of his ration allowance.

"We have some instances of stealing, but most of

them are trivial. Recently, we took from the pay of one whole battalion the cost of thirty-one cheeses which were taken from a railroad restaurant counter. The facts were that some of our troops en route were hungry and the train was stopping only for five minutes and the woman behind the counter didn't have time to even take, much less change, the money offered, so the men grabbed the cheeses and ran out just in time to board the train as it was moving off.

"There was one case, though, in which Uncle Sam didn't have the heart to charge any one. He paid the bill himself and maybe if you could send the story back home, the citizens who paid it would get a laugh worth the money. It happened during a recent cold spell when some of our troops were coming from seaboard to the interior. They travelled in semi-opened horse cars and it was cold, damn cold.

"One of the trains stopped in front of a small railroad station and six soldiers with cold hands and feet jumped from the car and entered the waiting room, in the centre of which was a large square coal stove with red hot sides. One man stood on another one's shoulders and disjointed the stove pipe. At the same time, two others placed poles under the bottom of the stove, lifted it off the floor and walked out of the room with it.

"They placed it in the horse car, stuck the pipe out of one door and were warm for the remainder of the trip. It was the first time in the history of that little village that anybody had ever stolen a red hot stove. The French government, owning the railroads, made claim against us for four hundred francs for the stove and eleven francs' worth of coal in it. Uncle Sam paid the bill and was glad to do it.

"I know of only one case to beat that one and that

concerned an infantryman who stole a hive full of honey and took the bees along with it. The medical department handled one aspect of the case and the provost marshal the other. The bees meted out some of the punishment and we stung his pay for the costs."

There was one thing, however, that men on the move found it most difficult to steal and that was sleep. So at least it seemed the next morning when we swung into the road at daybreak and continued our march into the north. Much speculation went the rounds as to our destination. The much debated question was as to whether our forces would be incorporated with Foch's reserve armies and held in readiness for a possible counter offensive, or whether we should be placed in one of the line armies and assigned to holding a position in the path of the German push. But all this conjecture resulted in nothing more than passing the time. Our way led over byroads and side lanes which the French master of circulation had laid down for us.

Behind an active front, the French sanctified their main roads and reserved them for the use of fast motor traffic and the rushing up of supplies or reserves in cases of necessity. Thousands of poilus too old for combat duty did the repair work on these main arteries. All minor and slow moving traffic was side-tracked to keep the main line clear. At times we were forced to cross the main highroads and then we encountered the forward and backward stream of traffic to and from the front. At one of those intersections, I sought the grass bank at the side of the road for rest. Two interesting actors in this great drama were there before me. One was an American soldier wearing a blue brassard with the white letters M. P. He was a military policeman on duty as a

road marker whose function is to regulate traffic and prevent congestion.

Beside him was seated a peculiar looking person whose knee length skirts of khaki exposed legs encased in wrap puttees. A motor coat of yellow leather and the visored cap of a British Tommy completed the costume. The hair showing beneath the crown of the cap was rather long and straight, but betrayed traces of having been recently close cropped. For all her masculine appearance, she was French and the young road marker was lavishing upon her everything he had gleaned in a Freshman year of French in a Spokane high school.

I offered my cigarette case and was surprised when the girl refrained. That surprise increased when I saw her extract from a leather case of her own a full fledged black cigar which she proceeded to light and smoke with gusto. When I expressed my greater surprise, she increased it by shrugging her shoulders prettily, plunging one gauntleted hand into a side pocket and producing a pipe with a pouch of tobacco.

There was nothing dainty about that pipe. It had no delicate amber stem nor circlet of filigree gold. There was no meerschaum ornamentation. It was just a good old Jimmy pipe with a full-grown cake in the black burnt bowl, and a well bitten, hard rubber mouth piece. It looked like one of those that father used to consent to have boiled once a year, after mother had charged it with rotting the lace curtains. If war makes men of peace-time citizens, then——

But she was a girl and her name was Yvonne. The red-winged letter on her coat lapel placed her in the automobile service and the motor ambulance stationed at the road side explained her special branch of work. She inquired the meaning of my correspondent's insignia and

FIRST OF THE GREAT FRANCO-AMERICAN COUNTER-OFFENSIVE AT CHATEAU-THIERRY. THE FRENCH BABY TANKS, KNOWN AS "CHARS D'ASSAUTS," ENTERING THE WOOD OF VILLERS COTTORET, SOUTHWEST OF SOISSONS

YANKS AND POILUS VIEWING THE CITY OF CHATEAU-THIERRY, WHERE, IN THE MIDDLE OF JULY, THE YANKS TURNED THE TIDE OF BATTLE AGAINST THE HUNS

then explained that she had drawn pastelles for a Paris publication before the war, but had been transporting *blessés* since. The French lesson proceeded and Spokane Steve and I learned from her that the longest word in the French language is spelled "Anticonstitutionellement." I expressed the hope that some day both of us would be able to pronounce it.

On the girl's right wrist was a silver chain bracelet with identification disk. In response to our interested gaze, she exhibited it to us, and upon her own volition, informed us that she was a descendant of the same family as Jeanne d'Arc. Steve heard and winked to me with a remark that they couldn't pull any stuff like that on anybody from Spokane, because he had never heard that that Maid of Orleans had been married. Yvonne must have understood the last word because she explained forthwith that she had not claimed direct descendence from the famous Jeanne, but from the same family. Steve looked her in the eye and said, "Jay compraw."

She explained the meaning of the small gold and silver medals suspended from the bracelet. She detached two and presented them to us. One of them bore in relief the image of a man in flowing robes carrying a child on his shoulder, and the reverse depicted a tourist driving a motor through hilly country.

"That is St. Christophe," said Yvonne. "He is the patron saint of travellers. His medal is good luck against accidents on the road. Here is one of St. Elias. He is the new patron saint of the aviators. You remember. Didn't he go to heaven in a fiery chariot, or fly up on golden wings or something like that? Anyhow, all the aviators wear one of his medals."

St. Christophe was attached to my identification disk. Steve declared infantrymen travelled too slowly ever

to have anything happen to them and that he was going to give his to a friend who drove a truck. When I fell in line with the next passing battery and moved down the road, Spokane Steve and the Yvonne of the family of Jeanne had launched into a discussion of prize fighting and chewing tobacco.

In billets that night, in a village not far from Beauvais, the singing contest for the prize of fifty dollars offered by the battalion commander Major Robert R. McCormick was resumed with intense rivalry between the tenors and basses of batteries A and B. A "B" Battery man was croaking Annie Laurie, when an "A" Battery booster in the audience remarked audibly,

"Good Lord, I'd rather hear first call." First call is the bugle note that disturbs sleep and starts the men on the next day's work.

A worried lieutenant found me in the crowd around the rolling kitchen and inquired:

"Do you know whether there's a provost guard on that inn down the road?" I couldn't inform him, but inquired the reason for his alarm.

"I've got a hunch that the prune juice is running knee deep to-night," he replied, "and I don't want any of my section trying to march to-morrow with swelled heads."

"Prune juice" is not slang. It is a veritable expression and anybody who thinks that the favourite of the boarding house table cannot produce a fermented article that is *très fort* in the way of a throat burner, is greatly mistaken. In France the fermented juice of the prune is called "water of life," but it carries a "dead to the world" kick. The simple prune, which the army used

to call "native son" by reason of its California origin, now ranks with its most inebriating sisters of the vine.

The flow of *eau de vie* must have been dammed at the inn. On the road the next day, I saw a mule driver wearing a sixteen candle power black eye. When I inquired the source of the lamp shade, he replied:

"This is my first wound in the war of movement. Me and the cop had an offensive down in that town that's spelt like Sissors but you say it some other way." I knew he was thinking of Gisors.

The third and fourth day's march brought us into regions nearer the front, where the movement of refugees on the roads seemed greater, where the roll of the guns came constantly from the north, where enemy motors droned through the air on missions of frightfulness.

There was a major in our regiment whose knowledge of French was confined to the single affirmative exclamation, "Ah, oui." He worked this expression constantly in the French conversation with a refugee woman from the invaded districts. She with her children occupied one room in the cottage. When the major started to leave, two days later, the refugee woman addressed him in a reproving tone and with tears. He could only reply with sympathetic "Ah, oui's," which seemed to make her all the more frantic.

An interpreter straightened matters out by informing the major that the woman wanted to know why he was leaving without getting her furniture.

"What furniture?" replied the puzzled major.

"Why, she says," said the interpreter, "that you promised her you would send three army trucks to her house back of the German lines and bring all of her household goods to this side of the line. She says that she explained all of it to you and you said, 'Ah, oui.' "

The major has since abandoned the "ah, oui" habit.

At one o'clock one morning, orders reached the battalion for reconnaissance detail; each battery to be ready to take road by daylight. We were off at break of day in motor trucks with a reel cart of telephone wire hitched on behind. Thirty minutes later we rumbled along roads under range of German field pieces and arrived in a village designated as battalion headquarters to find that we were first to reach the sector allotted for American occupation. The name of the town was Serevilliers.

Our ears did not delude us about the activity of the sector, but I found that officers and men of the detail were inclined to accept the heavy shelling in a non-committal manner until a French interpreter attached to us remarked that artillery action in the sector was as intense as any he had experienced at Verdun.

If the ever present crash of shells reminded us that we were opposite the peak of the German push, there was plenty of work to engage minds that might otherwise have paid too much attention to the dangers of their location. A chalk cellar with a vaulted ceiling and ventilators, unfortunately opening on the enemy side of the upper structure, was selected as the battalion command post. The men went to work immediately to remove piles of dirty billeting straw under which was found glass, china, silverware and family portraits, all of which had been hurriedly buried by the owners of the house not two weeks before.

While linemen planned communications, and battery officers surveyed gun positions, the battalion commander and two orienting officers went forward to the frontal zone to get the first look at our future targets and establish observation posts from which our firing could be

directed. I accompanied the small party, which was led by a French officer familiar with the sector. It was upon his advice that we left the roads and took cuts across fields, avoiding the path and road intersections and taking advantage of any shelter offered by the ground.

Virgin fields on our way bore the enormous craters left by the explosion of poorly directed German shells of heavy calibre. Orders were to throw ourselves face downward upon the ground upon the sound of each approaching missile. There is no text book logic on judging from the sound of a shell whether it has your address written on it, but it is surprising how quick that education may be obtained by experience. Several hours of walking and dropping to the ground resulted in an attuning of the ears which made it possible to judge approximately whether that oncoming, whining, unseen thing from above would land dangerously near or ineffectively far from us. The knowledge was common to all of us and all of our ears were keenly tuned for the sounds. Time after time the collective judgment and consequent prostration of the entire party was proven well timed by the arrival of a shell uncomfortably close.

We gained a wooded hillside that bristled with busy French seventy-fives, which the German tried in vain to locate with his howitzer fire. We mounted a forest plateau, in the centre of which a beautiful white château still held out against the enemy's best efforts to locate it with his guns. One shell addressed in this special direction fortunately announced its coming with such unmistakable vehemence that our party all landed in the same shell hole at once.

Every head was down when the explosion came. Branches and pieces of tree trunk were whirled upward, and the air became populated with deadly bumble bees

and humming birds, for such is the sound that the shell splinters make. When I essayed our shell hole afterward, I couldn't fathom how five of us had managed to accommodate ourselves in it, but in the rush of necessity, no difficulty had been found.

Passing from the woods forward, one by one, over a bald field, we skirted a village that was being heavily shelled, and reached a trench on the side of the hill in direct view of the German positions. The enemy partially occupied the ruined village of Cantigny not eight hundred yards away, but our glasses were unable to pick up the trace of a single person in the debris. French shells, arriving endlessly in the village, shot geysers of dust and wreckage skyward. It was from this village, several days later, that our infantry patrols brought in several prisoners, all of whom were suffering from shell shock. But our men in the village opposite underwent the same treatment at the hands of the German artillery.

It was true of this sector that what corresponded to the infantry front line was a much safer place to be in than in the reserve positions, or about the gun pits in villages or along roads in our back area. Front line activity was something of minor consideration, as both sides seemed to have greater interests at other points and, in addition to that, the men of both sides were busy digging trenches and shelters. There were numerous machine gun posts which swept with lead the indeterminate region between the lines, and at night, patrols from both sides explored as far as possible the holdings of the other side.

Returning to the battalion headquarters that night by a route apparently as popular to German artillery as was the one we used in the forenoon, we found a telephone switchboard in full operation in the sub-cellar, and mess

headquarters established in a clean kitchen above the ground. Food was served in the kitchen and we noticed that one door had suffered some damage which had caused it to be boarded up and that the plaster ceiling of the room was full of fresh holes and rents in a dozen places. At every shock to the earth, a little stream of oats would come through the holes from the attic above. These falling down on the officer's neck in the midst of a meal, would have no effect other than causing him to call for his helmet to ward off the cereal rain.

We learned more about the sinister meaning of that broken door and the ceiling holes when it became necessary later in the evening to move mess to a safer location. The kitchen was located just thirty yards back of the town cross roads and an unhealthy percentage of German shells that missed the intersection caused too much interruption in our cook's work.

We found that the mess room was vacant by reason of the fact that it had become too unpleasant for French officers, who had relinquished it the day before. We followed their suite and were not surprised when an infantry battalion mess followed us into the kitchen and just one day later, to the hour, followed us out of it.

Lying on the floor in that chalk cellar that night and listening to the pound of arriving shells on nearby cross roads and battery positions, we estimated how long it would be before this little village would be completely levelled to the ground. Already gables were disappearing from houses, sturdy chimneys were toppling and stone walls were showing jagged gaps. One whole wall of the village school had crumbled before one blast, so that now the wooden desks and benches of the pupils and their books and papers were exposed to view from the

street. On the blackboard was a penmanship model which read:

"Let no day pass without having saved something."

An officer came down the dark stone steps into the cellar, kicked off his boots and lay down on some blankets in one corner.

"I just heard some shells come in that didn't explode," I remarked. "Do you know whether they were gas or duds?"

"I don't know whether they were gas or not," he said, "but I do know that that horse out in the yard is certainly getting ripe."

The defunct animal referred to occupied an uncovered grave adjoining our ventilator. Sleeping in a gas mask was not the most unpleasant form of slumber.

CHAPTER XII

BEFORE CANTIGNY

It is strange how sleep can come at the front in surroundings not unlike the interior of a boiler factory, but it does. I heard of no man who slept in the cellars beneath the ruins of Serevilliers that night being disturbed by the pounding of the shells and the jar of the ground, both of which were ever present through our dormant senses. Stranger still was the fact that at midnight when the shelling almost ceased, for small intervals, almost every sleeper there present was aroused by the sudden silence. When the shelling was resumed, sleep returned.

"When I get back on the farm outside of Chicago," said one officer, "I don't believe I will be able to sleep unless I get somebody to stand under my window and shake a thunder sheet all night."

It is also remarkable how the tired human, under such conditions, can turn off the switch on an energetic imagination and resign himself completely to fate. In those cellars that night, every man knew that one direct hit of a "two ten" German shell on his particular cellar wall, would mean taps for everybody in the cave. Such a possibility demands consideration in the slowest moving minds.

Mentalities and morale of varying calibre cogitate upon this matter at varying lengths, but I doubt in the end if there is much difference in the conclusion arrived at. Such reflections produce the inevitable decision that if one particular shell is coming into your particular

abode, there is nothing you can do to keep it out, so "What the hell!" You might just as well go to sleep and forget it because if it gets you, you most probably will never know anything about it anyway. I believe such is the philosophy of the shelled.

It must have been three o'clock in the morning when a sputtering motor cycle came to a stop in the shelter of our cellar door and a gas guard standing there exchanged words with some one. It ended in the sound of hobnails on the stone steps as the despatch rider descended, lighting his way with the yellow shaft from an electric pocket lamp.

"What is it?" inquired the Major, awakening and rolling over on his side.

"Just come from regimental headquarters," said the messenger. "I'm carrying orders on to the next town. Adjutant gave me this letter to deliver to you, sir. The Adjutant's compliments, sir, and apologies for waking you, but he said the mail just arrived and the envelope looked important and he thought you might like to get it right away."

"Hmm," said the Major, weighing the official looking envelope in one hand and observing both the American stamps in one corner and numerous addresses to which the missive had been forwarded. He tore off one end and extracted a sheet which he unfolded and read while the messenger waited at his request. I was prepared to hear of a promotion order from Washington and made ready to offer congratulations. The Major smiled and tossed the paper over to me, at the same time reaching for a notebook and fountain pen.

"Hold a light for me," he said to the messenger as he sat on the edge of the bed and began writing. "This is urgent and I will make answer now. You will mail it

at regimental headquarters." As his pen scratched across the writing pad, I read the letter he had just received. The stationery bore the heading of an alumni association of a well-known eastern university. The contents ran as follows:

"Dear Sir: What are you doing for your country? What are you doing to help win the war? While our brave boys are in France facing the Kaiser's shell and gas, the alumni association has directed me as secretary to call upon all the old boys of the university and invite them to do their bit for Uncle Sam's fighting men. We ask your subscription to a fund which we are raising to send cigarettes to young students of the university who are now serving with the colours and who are so nobly maintaining the traditions of our Alma Mater. Please fill out the enclosed blank, stating your profession and present occupation. Fraternally yours, ———— Secretary."

The Major was watching me with a smile as I concluded reading.

"Here's my answer," he said, reading from a notebook leaf:

"Your letter reached me to-night in a warm little village in France. With regard to my present profession, will inform you that I am an expert in ammunition trafficking and am at present occupied in exporting large quantities of shells to Germany over the air route. Please find enclosed check for fifty francs for cigarettes for youngsters who, as you say, are so nobly upholding the sacred traditions of our school. After all, we old boys should do something to help along the cause. Yours

to best the Kaiser. ————, Major. ———— Field Artillery, U. S. A. On front in France."

"I guess that ought to hold them," said the Major as he folded the letter and addressed an envelope. It rather seemed to me that it would but before I could finish the remark, the Major was back asleep in his blankets.

By daylight, I explored the town, noting the havoc wrought by the shells that had arrived in the night. I had thought in seeing refugees moving southward along the roads, that there was little variety of articles related to human existence that they failed to carry away with them. But one inspection of the abandoned abodes of the unfortunate peasants of Serevilliers was enough to convince me of the greater variety of things that had to be left behind. Old people have saving habits and the French peasants pride themselves upon never throwing anything away.

The cottage rooms were littered with the discarded clothing of all ages, discarded but saved. Old shoes and dresses, ceremonial high hats and frock coats, brought forth only for weddings or funerals, were mixed on the floor with children's toys, prayer books and broken china. Shutters and doors hung aslant by single hinges. In the village *estaminet* much mud had been tracked in by exploring feet and the red tiled floor was littered with straw and pewter measuring mugs, dear to the heart of the antiquary.

The ivory balls were gone from the dust covered billiard table, but the six American soldiers billeted in the cellar beneath had overcome this discrepancy. They enjoyed after dinner billiards just the same with three large wooden balls from a croquet court in the garden.

A croquet ball is a romping substitute when it hits the green cushions.

That afternoon we laid more wire across fields to the next town to the north. Men who do this job are, in my opinion, the most daring in any organisation that depends for efficiency upon uninterrupted telephone communication. For them, there is no shelter when a deluge of shells pours upon a field across which their wire is laid. Without protection of any kind from the flying steel splinters, they must go to that spot to repair the cut wires and restore communication. During one of these shelling spells, I reached cover of the road side *abri* and prepared to await clearer weather.

In the distance, down the road, appeared a scudding cloud of dust. An occasional shell dropping close on either side of the road seemed to add speed to the apparition. As it drew closer, I could see that it was a motor cycle of the three wheeled bathtub variety. The rider on the cycle was bending close over his handle bars and apparently giving her all there was in her, but the bulky figure that filled to overflowing the side car, rode with his head well back.

At every irregularity in the road, the bathtub contraption bounced on its springs, bow and stern rising and falling like a small ship in a rough sea. Its nearer approach revealed that the giant torso apparent above its rim was encased in a double breasted khaki garment which might have marked the wearer as either the master of a four in hand or a Mississippi steamboat of the ante bellum type. The enormous shoulders, thus draped, were surmounted by a huge head, which by reason of its rigid, backward, star-gazing position appeared mostly as chin and double chin. The whole was topped by a huge fat cigar which sprouted upward from the elevated chin

and at times gave forth clouds like the forward smoke-stack on the *Robert E. Lee.*

I was trying to decide in my mind whether the elevated chin posture of the passenger was the result of pride, bravado or a boil on the Adam's apple, when the scudding comet reached the shelter of the protecting bank in which was located the chiselled dog kennel that I occupied. As the machine came to halt, the superior chin depressed itself ninety degrees, and brought into view the smiling features of that smile-making gentleman from Paducah—Mr. Irvin S. Cobb. Machine, rider and passenger stopped for breath and I made bold to ask the intrepid humourist if he suffered from a too keen sense of smell or a saw edge collar.

"I haven't a sensitive nose, a saw edge collar or an inordinate admiration for clouds," the creator of Judge Priest explained with reference to his former stiff-necked pose, "but George here," waving to the driver, "took a sudden inspiration for fast movement. The jolt almost took my head off and the wind kept me from getting it back into position. George stuck his spurs into this here flying bootblack stand just about the time something landed near us that sounded like a kitchen stove half loaded with window weights and window panes. I think George made a record for this road. I've named it Buh-Looey Boulevard."

When the strafing subsided we parted and I reached the next deserted town without incident. It was almost the vesper hour or what had been the allotted time for that rite in those parts when I entered the yard of the village church, located in an exposed position at a cross roads on the edge of the town. A sudden unmistakable whirr sounded above and I threw myself on the ground just as the high velocity, small calibre German shell

registered a direct hit on the side of the nave where roof and wall met.

While steel splinters whistled through the air, an avalanche of slate tiles slid down the slanting surface of the roof, and fell in a clattering cascade on the graves in the yard below. I sought speedy shelter in the lee of a tombstone. Several other shells had struck the churchyard and one of them had landed on the final resting place of the family of Roger La Porte. The massive marble slab which had sealed the top of the sunken vault had been heaved aside and one wall was shattered, leaving open to the gaze a cross section view of eight heavy caskets lying in an orderly row.

Nearby were fresh mounds of yellow earth, surmounted by now unpainted wooden crosses on which were inscribed in pencil the names of French soldiers with dates, indicating that their last sacrifice for the tri-colour of la Patria had been made ten days prior. In the soil at the head of each grave, an ordinary beer bottle had been planted neck downward, and through the glass one could see the paper scroll on which the name, rank and record of the dead man was preserved. While I wondered at this prosaic method of identification, an American soldier came around the corner of the church, lighted a cigarette and sat down on an old tombstone.

"Stick around if you want to hear something good," he said, "That is if that last shell didn't bust the organ. There's a French poilu who has come up here every afternoon at five o'clock for the last three days and he plays the sweetest music on the organ. It certainly is great. Reminds me of when I was an altar boy, back in St. Paul."

We waited and soon there came from the rickety old

organ loft the soothing tones of an organ. The ancient pipes, sweetened by the benedictions of ages, poured forth melody to the touch of one whose playing was simple, but of the soul. We sat silently among the graves as the rays of the dying sun brought to life new colouring in the leaded windows of stained glass behind which a soldier of France swayed at the ivory keyboard and with heavenly harmony ignored those things of death and destruction that might arrive through the air any minute.

My companion informed me that the poilu at the organ wore a uniform of horizon blue which marked him as casual to this village, whose French garrisons were Moroccans with the distinctive khaki worn by all French colonials in service. The sign of the golden crescent on their collar tabs identified them as children of Mahomet and one would have known as much anyway upon seeing the use to which the large crucifix standing in what was the market place had been put.

So as not to impede traffic through the place, it had become necessary to elevate the field telephone wires from the ground and send them across the road overhead. The crucifix in the centre of the place had presented itself as excellent support for this wire and the sons of the prophet had utilised it with no intention of disrespect. The uplifted right knee of the figure on the cross was insulated and wired. War, the moderniser and mocker of Christ, seemed to have devised new pain for the Teacher of Peace. The crucifixion had become the electrocution.

At the foot of the cross had been nailed a rudely made sign conveying to all who passed the French warning that this was an exposed crossing and should be negotiated rapidly. Fifty yards away another board bore

the red letters R. A. S. and by following the direction indicated by arrows, one arrived at the cellar in which the American doctor had established a Relief Aid Station. The Medico had furnished his subterranean apartments with furniture removed from the house above.

"Might as well bring it down here and make the boys comfortable," he said, "as to leave it up there and let shells make kindling out of it. Funny thing about these cellars. Ones with western exposure—that is, with doors and ventilators opening on the side away from the enemy seem scarcest. That seems to have been enough to have revived all that talk about German architects having had something to do with the erection of those buildings before the war. You remember at one time it was said that a number of houses on the front had been found to have plaster walls on the side nearest the enemy and stone walls on the other side. There might be something to it, but I doubt it."

Across the street an American battalion headquarters had been established on the first floor and in the basement of the house, which appeared the most pretentious in the village. Telephone wires now entered the building through broken window panes, and within maps had been tacked to plaster walls and the furniture submitted to the hard usage demanded by war. An old man conspicuous by his civilian clothes wandered about the yard here and there, picking up some stray implement or nick-nack, hanging it up on a wall or placing it carefully aside.

"There's a tragedy," the battalion commander told me. "That man is mayor of this town. He was forced to flee with the rest of the civilians. He returned to-day to look over the ruins. This is his house we occupy. I explained that much of it is as we found it, but that we undoubtedly

have broken some things. I could see that every broken chair and window and plate meant a heart throb to him, but he only looked up at me with his wrinkled old face and smiled as he said, 'It is all right, Monsieur. I understand. *C'est la guerre.*' "

The old man opened one of his barn doors, revealing a floor littered with straw and a fringe of hobnailed American boots. A night-working detail was asleep in blankets. A sleepy voice growled out something about closing the door again and the old man with a polite, *"Pardonnez-moi, messieurs,"* swung the wooden portal softly shut. His home—his house—his barn—his straw—*c'est la guerre.*

An evening meal of "corn willy" served on some of the Mayor's remaining chinaware, was concluded by a final course of fresh spring onions. These came from the Mayor's own garden just outside the door. As the cook affirmed, it was no difficulty to gather them.

"Every night Germans drop shells in the garden," he said. "I don't even have to pull 'em. Just go out in the morning and pick 'em up off the ground."

I spent part of the night in gun pits along the road side, bordering the town. This particular battery of heavies was engaged on a night long programme of interdiction fire laid down with irregular intensity on cross roads and communication points in the enemy's back areas. Under screens of camouflage netting, these howitzers with mottled bores squatting frog-like on their carriages, intermittently vomited flame, red, green and orange. The detonations were ear-splitting and cannoneers relieved the recurring shocks by clapping their hands to the sides of their head and balancing on the toes each time the lanyard was pulled.

Infantry reserves were swinging along in the road directly in back of the guns. They were moving up to

forward positions and they sang in an undertone as they moved in open order.

"Glor—ree—us, Glor—ree—us!
One keg of beer for the four of us.
Glory be to Mike there are no more of us,
For four of us can drink it all alone."

Some of these marchers would come during an interval of silence to a position on the road not ten feet from a darkened, camouflaged howitzer just as it would shatter the air with a deafening crash. The suddenness and unexpectedness of the detonation would make the marchers start and jump involuntarily. Upon such occasions, the gun crews would laugh heartily and indulge in good natured raillery with the infantrymen.

"Whoa, Johnny Doughboy, don't you get frightened. We were just shipping a load of sauerkraut to the Kaiser," said one ear-hardened gunner. "Haven't you heard the orders against running your horses? Come down to a gallop and take it easy."

"Gwan, you leatherneck," returns an infantryman, "You smell like a livery stable. Better trade that pitchfork for a bayonet and come on up where there's some fighting."

"Don't worry about the fighting, little doughboy," came another voice from the dark gun pit. "This is a tray forte sector. If you don't get killed the first eight days, the orders is to shoot you for loafing. You're marching over what's called 'the road you don't come back on.'"

A train of ammunition trucks, timed to arrive at the moment when the road was unoccupied, put in appearance as the end of the infantry column passed, and the

captain in charge urged the men on to speedy unloading and fumed over delays by reason of darkness. The men received big shells in their arms and carried them to the roadside dumps where they were piled in readiness for the guns. The road was in an exposed position and this active battery was liable to draw enemy fire at any time, so the ammunition train captain was anxious to get his charges away in a hurry.

His fears were not without foundation, because in the midst of the unloading, one German missile arrived in a nearby field and sprayed the roadway with steel just as every one flattened out on the ground. Five ammunition hustlers arose with minor cuts and one driver was swearing at the shell fragment which had gone through the radiator of his truck and liberated the water contents. The unloading was completed with all speed, and the ammunition train moved off, towing a disabled truck. With some of the gunners who had helped in unloading, I crawled into the chalk dugout to share sleeping quarters in the straw.

"What paper do you represent?" one man asked me as he sat in the straw, unwrapping his puttees. I told him.

"Do you want to know the most popular publication around this place?" he asked, and I replied affirmatively.

"It's called the *Daily Woollen Undershirt,*" he said. "Haven't you seen everybody sitting along the roadside reading theirs and trying to keep up with things? Believe me, it's some reading-matter, too."

"Don't let him kid you," said the section chief, "I haven't had to read mine yet. The doctor fixed up the baths in town and yesterday he passed around those flea charms. Have you seen them?"

For our joint inspection there was passed the string necklace with two linen tabs soaked in aromatic oil of

cedar, while the section chief gave an impromptu lecture on personal sanitation. It was concluded by a peremptory order from without for extinction of all lights. The candle stuck on the helmet top was snuffed and we lay down in darkness with the guns booming away on either side.

Our positions were located in a country almost as new to war as were the fields of Flanders in the fall of '14. A little over a month before it had all been peaceful farming land, far behind the belligerent lines. Upon our arrival, its sprouting fields of late wheat and oats were untended and bearing their first harvest of shell craters.

The abandoned villages now occupied by troops told once more the mute tales of the homeless. The villagers, old men, old women and children, had fled, driving before them their cows and farm animals even as they themselves had been driven back by the train of German shells. In their deserted cottages remained the fresh traces of their departure and the ruthless rupturing of home ties, generations old.

On every hand were evidences of the reborn war of semi-movement. One day I would see a battery of light guns swing into position by a roadside, see an observing officer mount by ladder to a tree top and direct the firing of numberless rounds into the rumbling east. By the next morning, they would have changed position, rumbled off to other parts, leaving beside the road only the marks of their cannon wheels and mounds of empty shell cases.

Between our infantry lines and those of the German, there was yet to grow the complete web of woven wire entanglements that marred the landscapes on the long established fronts. Still standing, silent sentinels over some of our front line positions were trees, church steeples,

dwellings and barns that as yet had not been levelled to the ground. Dugouts had begun to show their entrances in the surface of the ground and cross roads had started to sprout with rudely constructed shelters. Fat sandbags were just taking the places of potted geraniums on the sills of first floor windows. War's toll was being exacted daily, but the country had yet to pay the full price. It was going through that process of degeneration toward the stripped and barren but it still held much of its erstwhile beauty.

Those days before Cantigny were marked by particularly heavy artillery fire. The ordnance duel was unrelenting and the daily exchange of shells reached an aggregate far in excess of anything that the First Division had ever experienced before.

Nightly the back areas of the front were shattered with shells. The German was much interested in preventing us from bringing up supplies and munition. We manifested the same interest toward him. American batteries firing at long range, harrassed the road intersections behind the enemy's line and wooded places where relief troops might have been assembled under cover of darkness. The expenditure of shells was enormous but it continued practically twenty-four hours a day. German prisoners, shaking from the nervous effects of the pounding, certified to the untiring efforts of our gunners.

The small nameless village that we occupied almost opposite the German position in Cantigny seemed to receive particular attention from the enemy artillery. In retaliation, our guns almost levelled Cantigny and a nearby village which the enemy occupied. Every hour, under the rain of death, the work of digging was continued and the men doing it needed no urging from their

officers. There was something sinister and emphatic about the whine of a "two ten German H. E." that inspired one with a desire to start for the antipodes by the shortest and most direct route.

The number of arrivals by way of the air in that particular village every day numbered high in the thousands. Under such conditions, no life-loving human could have failed to produce the last degree of utility out of a spade. The continual dropping of shells in the ruins and the unending fountains of chalk dust and dirt left little for the imagination, but one officer told me that it reminded him of living in a room where some one was eternally beating the carpet.

This taste of the war of semi-movement was appreciated by the American soldier. It had in it a dash of novelty, lacking in the position warfare to which he had become accustomed in the mud and marsh of the Moselle and the Meuse. For one thing, there were better and cleaner billets than had ever been encountered before by our men. Fresh, unthrashed oats and fragrant hay had been found in the hurriedly abandoned lofts back of the line and in the caves and cellars nearer the front.

In many places the men were sleeping on feather mattresses in old-fashioned wooden bedsteads that had been removed from jeopardy above ground to comparative safety below. Whole caves were furnished, and not badly furnished, by this salvage of furniture, much of which would have brought fancy prices in any collection of antiques.

Forced to a recognition solely of intrinsic values, our men made prompt utilisation of much of the material abandoned by the civilian population. Home in the field is where a soldier sleeps and after all, why not have it as comfortable as his surroundings will afford? Those

caves and vegetable cellars, many with walls and vaulted ceilings of clean red brick or white blocks of chalk, constituted excellent shelters from shell splinters and even protected the men from direct hits by missiles of small calibre.

Beyond the villages, our riflemen found protection in quickly scraped holes in the ground. There were some trenches but they were not contiguous. "No Man's Land" was an area of uncertain boundary. Our gunners had quarters burrowed into the chalk not far from their gun pits. All communication and the bringing up of shells and food were conducted under cover of darkness. Under such conditions, we lived and waited for the order to go forward.

Our sector in that battle of the Somme was so situated that the opposing lines ran north and south. The enemy was between us and the rising sun. Behind our rear echelons was the main road between Amiens and Beauvais. Amiens, the objective of the German drive, was thirty-five kilometres away on our left, Beauvais was the same distance on our right and two hours by train from Paris.

We were eager for the fight. The graves of our dead dotted new fields in France. We were holding with the French on the Picardy line. We were between the Germans and the sea. We were before Cantigny.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RUSH OF THE RAIDERS—"ZERO AT 2 A. M."

While the First U. S. Division was executing in Picardy a small, planned operation which resulted in the capture of the German fortified positions in the town of Cantigny, other American divisions at other parts along the line were indulging in that most common of frontal diversions—the raid.

I was a party to one of these affairs on the Toul front. The 26th Division, composed of National Guard troops from New England, made the raid. On Memorial Day, I had seen those men of the Yankee Division decorating the graves of their dead in a little cemetery back of the line. By the dawning light of the next morning, I saw them come trooping back across No Man's Land after successfully decorating the enemy positions with German graves.

It was evening when we dismissed our motor in the ruined village of Hamondville and came into first contact with the American soldiers that had been selected for the raid. Their engineers were at work in the street connecting sections of long dynamite-loaded pipes which were to be used to blast an ingress through the enemy's wire. In interested circles about them were men who were to make the dash through the break even before the smoke cleared and the debris ceased falling. They were to be distinguished from the village garrison by the fact that the helmets worn by the raiders were covered with burlap and some of them had their faces blackened.

In the failing evening light, we walked on through

several heaps of stone and rafters that had once been villages, and were stopped by a military policeman who inquired in broad Irish brogue for our passes. These meeting with his satisfaction, he advised us to avoid the road ahead with its dangerous twist, known as "Dead Man's Curve," for the reason that the enemy was at that minute placing his evening contribution of shells in that vicinity. Acting on the policeman's suggestion, we took a short cut across fields rich with shell holes. Old craters were grown over with the grass and mustard flowers with which this country abounds at this time of year. Newer punctures showed as wounds in the yellow soil and contained pools of evil-smelling water, green with scum.

Under the protection of a ridge, which at least screened us from direct enemy observation, we advanced toward the jagged skyline of a ruined village on the crest. The odour of open graves befouled the sheltered slope, indicating that enemy shells had penetrated its small protection and disturbed the final dugouts of the fallen.

Once in the village of Beaumont, we followed the winding duckboards and were led by small signs painted on wood to the colonel's headquarters. We descended the stone steps beneath a rickety looking ruin and entered.

"Guests for our party," was the Colonel's greeting. The command post had a long narrow interior which was well lighted but poorly ventilated, the walls and floor were of wood and a low beamed ceiling was supported by timbers. "Well, I think it will be a good show."

"We are sending over a little party of new boys just for practice and a 'look-see' in Hunland. We have two companies in this regiment which feel they've sorter been left out on most of the fun to date, so this affair has been arranged for them. We put the plans together last week and pushed the boys through three days of train-

ing for it back of the lines. They're fit as fiddlers to-night and it looks like there'll be no interruption to their pleasure.

"No one man in the world, be he correspondent or soldier, could see every angle of even so small a thing as a little raid like this," the Colonel explained. "What you can't see you have got to imagine. I'm suggesting that you stay right in here for the show. That telephone on my adjutant's desk is the web centre of all things occurring in this sector to-night and the closer you are to it, the more you can see and learn. Lieutenant Warren will take you up the road first and give you a look out of the observatory, so you'll know in what part of Germany our tourists are going to explore."

Darkness had fallen when we emerged, but there were sufficient stars out to show up the outline of the gaping walls on either side of our way. We passed a number of sentries and entered a black hole in the wall of a ruin. After stumbling over the uneven floor in a darkened passage for some minutes, we entered a small room where several officers were gathered around a table on which two burning candles were stuck in bottles. Our guide, stepping to one end of the room, pulled aside a blanket curtain and passed through a narrow doorway. We followed.

Up a narrow, steep, wooden stairway between two walls of solid masonry, not over two feet apart, we passed, and arrived on a none too stable wooded runway with a guide rail on either side. Looking up through the ragged remains of the wooden roof frame, now almost nude of tiles, we could see the starry sky. Proceeding along the runway, we arrived, somewhere in that cluster of ruins, in a darkened chamber whose interior

blackness was relieved by a lighter slit, an opening facing the enemy.

Against the starry skyline, we could see the black outline of a flat tableland in the left distance which we knew to be that part of the heights of Meuse for whose commanding ridge there have been so many violent contests between the close-locked lines in the forest of Apremont. More to the centre of the picture, stood Mont Sec, detached from the range and pushing its summit up through the lowland mist like the dorsal fin of a porpoise in a calm sea. On the right the lowland extended to indistinct distances, where it blended with the horizon.

In all that expanse of quiet night, there was not a single flicker of light, and at that time not a sound to indicate that unmentionable numbers of our men were facing one another in parallel ditches across the silent moor.

"See that clump of trees way out there?" said the lieutènant, directing our vision with his arm. "Now then, hold your hand at arm's length in front of you, straight along a line from your eyes along the left edge of your hand to that clump of trees. Now then, look right along the right edge of your hand and you will be looking at Richecourt. The Boche hold it. We go in on the right of that to-night."

We looked as per instructions and saw nothing. As far as we were concerned Richecourt was a daylight view, but these owls of the lookout knew its location as well as they knew the streets of their native towns back in New England. We returned to the colonel's command post, where cots were provided, and we turned in for a few hours' sleep on the promise of being called in time.

It was 2 A. M. when we were summoned to com-

mand post for the colonel's explanation of the night's plans. The regimental commander, smoking a long pipe with a curved stem, sat in front of a map on which he conducted the exposition.

"Here," he said, placing his finger on a section of the line marking the American trenches, "is the point of departure. That's the jumping off place. These X marks running between the lines is the enemy wire, and here, and here, and here are where we blow it up. We reach the German trenches at these points and clean up. Then the men follow the enemy communicating trenches, penetrate three hundred metres to the east edge of Richecourt, and return.

"Zero hour is 2:30. It's now 2:10. Our raiders have left their trenches already. They are out in No Man's Land now. The engineers are with them carrying explosives for the wire. There are stretcher bearers in the party to bring back our wounded and also signal men right behind them with wire and one telephone. The reports from that wire are relayed here and we will also be kept informed by runners. The whole party has thirty minutes in which to crawl forward and place explosives under the wire. They will have things in readiness by 2:30 and then the show begins."

Five minutes before the hour, I stepped out of the dugout and looked at the silent sky toward the front. Not even a star shell disturbed the blue black starlight. The guns were quiet. Five minutes more and all this was to change into an inferno of sound and light, flash and crash. There is always that minute of uncertainty before the raiding hour when the tensity of the situation becomes almost painful. Has the enemy happened to become aware of the plans? Have our men been deprived of the needed element of surprise? But for the

thousands of metres behind us, we know that in black battery pits anxious crews are standing beside their loaded pieces waiting to greet the tick of 2:30 with the jerk of the lanyard.

Suddenly the earth trembles. Through the dugout window facing back from the lines, I see the night sky burst livid with light. A second later and the crash reaches our ears. It is deafening. Now we hear the whine of shells as they burn the air overhead. The telephone bell rings.

"Yes, this is Boston," the Adjutant speaks into the receiver. We listen breathlessly. Has something gone wrong at the last minute?

"Right, I have it," said the Adjutant, hanging up the receiver and turning to the Colonel; "X-4 reports barrage dropped on schedule."

"Good," said the Colonel. "Gentlemen, here's what's happening. Our shells are this minute falling all along the German front line, in front of the part selected for the raid and on both flanks. Now then, this section of the enemy's position is confined in a box barrage which is pounding in his front and is placing a curtain of fire on his left and his right and another in his rear. Any German within the confines of that box trying to get out will have a damn hard time and so will any who try to come through it to help him."

"Boston talking," the Adjutant is making answer over the telephone. He repeats the message. "233, all the wire blown up, right."

"Fine," says the Colonel. "Now they are advancing and right in front of them is another rolling barrage of shells which is creeping forward on the German lines at the same pace our men are walking. They are walking in extended order behind it. At the same time our ar-

tillery has taken care of the enemy's guns by this time so that no German barrage will be able to come down on our raiders. Our guns for the last three minutes have been dumping gas and high explosives on every battery position behind the German lines. That's called 'Neutralisation.' "

"Boston talking." The room grows quiet again as the Adjutant takes the message.

"2:36. Y-1 reports O. K."

"Everything fine and dandy," the Colonel observes, smiling.

"Boston talking." There is a pause.

"2:39. G-7 reports sending up three red rockets east of A-19. The operator thinks it's a signal for outposts to withdraw and also for counter barrage."

"Too late," snaps the Colonel. "There's a reception committee in Hades waiting for 'em right now."

At 2:40 the dugout door opens and in walks Doc Comfort from the Red Cross First Aid Station across the road.

"Certainly is a pretty sight, Colonel. Fritzies' front door is lit up like a cathedral at high mass."

At 2:41. "A very good beginning," remarks a short, fat French Major who sits beside the Colonel. He represents the French army corps.

2:43. "Boston talking,— Lieutenant Kernan reports everything quiet in his sector."

2:45. "Boston talking," the Adjutant turns to the Colonel and repeats, "Pittsburgh wants to know if there's much coming in here."

"Tell them nothing to amount to anything," replies the Colonel and the Adjutant repeats the message over the wire. As he finished, one German shell did land so close to the dugout that the door blew open. The of-

ficer stepped to the opening and called out into the darkness.

"Gas guard. Smell anything?"

"Nothing, sir. Think they are only high explosives."

2.47. "Boston talking—enemy sent up one red, one green rocket and then three green rockets from B-14," the Adjutant repeats.

"Where is that report from?" asks the Colonel.

"The operator at Jamestown, sir," replies the Adjutant.

"Be ready for some gas, gentlemen," says the Colonel. "I think that's Fritzie's order for the stink. Orderly, put down gas covers on the doors and windows."

I watched the man unroll the chemically dampened blankets over the doors and windows.

2:49. "Boston talking—23 calls for barrage."

The Colonel and Major turn immediately to the wall map, placing a finger on 23 position.

"Hum," says the Colonel. "Counter attack, hey? Well, the barrage will take care of them, but get me Watson on the line."

"Connect me with Nantucket," the Adjutant asks the operator. "Hello, Watson, just a minute," turning to Colonel, "here's Watson, sir."

"Hello, Watson," the Colonel says, taking the receiver. "This is Yellow Jacket. Watch out for counter attack against 23. Place your men in readiness and be prepared to support Michel on your right. That's all," returning 'phone to the Adjutant, "Get me Mr. Lake."

While the Adjutant made the connection, the Colonel explained quickly the planned flanking movement on the map. "If they come over there," he said to the French Major, "not a God-damn one of them will ever get back alive."

The French Major made a note in his report book.

"Hello, Lake," the Colonel says, taking the 'phone. "This is Yellow Jacket. Keep your runners in close touch with Michel and Watson. Call me if anything happens. That's all."

3:00. "Boston talking—G-2 reports all O.K. Still waiting for the message from Worth."

3.02. "Storming party reports unhindered progress. No enemy encountered yet."

This was the first message back from the raiders. It had been sent over the wire and the instruments they carried with them and then relayed to the Colonel's command post.

"*Magnifique*," says the French Major.

3:04. "Boston talking. X-10 reports gas in Bois des Seicheprey."

3:05. "Boston talking. Hello, yes, nothing coming in here to amount to anything. Just had a gas warning but none arrived yet."

3:07. "Boston talking,—— Yes, all right" (turning to Colonel), "operator just received message from storming party 'so far so good.'"

"Not so bad for thirty-seven minutes after opening of the operation," remarks the Colonel.

"What is 'so far so good'?" inquires the French Major, whose knowledge of English did not extend to idioms. Some one explained.

3:09. "Boston talking—Watson reports all quiet around 23 now."

"Guess that barrage changed their minds," remarks the Colonel.

With gas mask at alert, I walked out for a breath of fresh air. The atmosphere in a crowded dugout is stifling. From guns still roaring in the rear and from in front came the trampling sound of shells arriving on

German positions. The first hints of dawn were in the sky. I returned in time to note the hour and hear:

3:18. "Boston talking—O-P reports enemy dropping line of shells from B-4 to B-8."

"Trying to get the boys coming back, hey?" remarks the Colonel. "A fat chance. They're not coming back that way."

3:21. "Boston talking—23 reports that the barrage called for in their sector was because the enemy had advanced within two hundred yards of his first position. Evidently they wanted to start something, but the barrage nipped them and they fell back fast."

"Perfect," says the French Major.

3:25. "Boston talking—two green and two red rockets were sent up by the enemy from behind Richecourt."

"Hell with 'em, now," the Colonel remarks.

3:28. "Boston talking—all O. K. in Z-2. Still waiting to hear from Michel."

"I rather wish they had developed their counter attack," says the Colonel. "I have a reserve that would certainly give them an awful wallop."

3:30. "Boston talking—more gas in Bois des Seicheprey."

3:33. "Boston talking—white stars reported from Richecourt."

"They must be on their way back by this time," says the Colonel, looking at his watch.

3:37. "Boston talking,—enemy now shelling on the north edge of the town. A little gas."

3:40. "Boston talking—X-1 reports some enemy long range retaliation on our right.

"They'd better come back the other way," says the Colonel.

"That was the intention, sir," the lieutenant reported from across the room.

3:42. "Boston talking—signalman with the party reports everything O. K."

"We don't know yet whether they have had any losses or got any prisoners," the Colonel remarks. "But the mechanism seems to have functioned just as well as it did in the last raid. We didn't get a prisoner that time, but I sorter feel that the boys will bring back a couple with them to-night."

3:49. "Boston talking—G-9 reports some of the raiding party has returned and passed that point."

"Came back pretty quick, don't you think so, Major?" said the Colonel with some pride. "Must have returned over the top."

It is 3:55 when we hear fast footsteps on the stone stairs leading down to the dugout entrance. There is a sharp rap on the door followed by the Colonel's command, "Come in."

A medium height private of stocky build, with shoulders heaving from laboured breathing and face wet with sweat, enters. He removes his helmet, revealing disordered blonde hair. He faces the Colonel and salutes.

"Sir, Sergeant Ransom reports with message from Liaison officer. All groups reached the objectives. No enemy encountered on the right, but a party on the left is believed to be returning with prisoners. We blew up their dugouts and left their front line in flames."

"Good work, boy," says the Colonel, rising and shaking the runner's hand. "You got here damn quick. Did you come by the Lincoln trench?"

"No, sir, I came over the top from the battalion post. Would have been here quicker, but two of us had to carry

back one boy to that point before I could get relieved."

"Wounded?"

"No, sir,—dead."

"Who was it?" asks the young lieutenant.

"Private Kater, sir, my squad mate."

As the sergeant raised his hand in parting salute, all of us saw suspended from his right wrist a most formidable weapon, apparently of his own construction. It was a pick handle with a heavy iron knob on one end and the same end cushioned with a mass of barbed wire rolled up like a ball of yarn. He smiled as he noticed our gaze.

"It's the persuader, sir," he said. "We all carried them."

He had hardly quitted the door when another heavily breathing figure with shirt half torn off by barbed wire appeared.

"K Company got there, sir; beg pardon, sir. I mean sir, Sergeant Wiltur reports, sir, with message from Liaison officer. All groups reached the objectives. They left their dugouts blazing and brought back one machine gun and three prisoners."

"Very good, Sergeant," said the Colonel. "Orderly, get some coffee for these runners."

"I'd like to see the doctor first, sir," said the runner with the torn shirt. "Got my hand and arm cut in the wire."

"Very well," said the Colonel, turning to the rest of the party, "I knew my boys would bring back bacon."

More footsteps on the entrance stairway and two men entered carrying something between them. Sweat had streaked through the charcoal coating on their faces leaving striped zebra-like countenances.

"Lieutenant Burlon's compliments, sir," said the first man. "Here's one of their machine guns."

"Who got it?" inquired the Colonel.

"Me and him, sir."

"How did you get it?"

"We just rolled 'em off it and took it."

"Rolled who off of it?"

"Two Germans, sir."

"What were they doing all that time?"

"Why, sir, they weren't doing anything. They were dead."

"Oh, very well, then," said the Colonel. "How did you happen to find the machine gun?"

"We knew where it was before we went over, sir," said the man simply. "We were assigned to get it and bring it back. We expected we'd have to fight for it, but I guess our barrage laid out the crew. Anyhow we rushed to the position and found them dead."

"All right," said the Colonel, "return to your platoon. Leave the gun here. It will be returned to you later and will be your property."

I went out with the machine gun captors and walked with them to the road. There was the hum of motors high overhead and we knew that American planes were above, going forward to observe and photograph German positions before the effects of our bombardments could be repaired. A line of flame and smoke pouring up from the enemy's front line showed where their dugouts and shelters were still burning.

Daylight was pouring down on a ruined village street, up which marched the returning raiders without thought of order. They were a happy, gleeful party, with helmets tipped back from their young faces wet and dirty, with rifles swung over their shoulders and the persuaders dangling from their wrists. Most of them were up to their knees and their wrap puttees were mostly in tat-

ters from the contact with the entanglements through which they had penetrated.

As they approached, I saw the cause for some of the jocularity. It was a chubby, little, boyish figure, who sat perched up on the right shoulder of a tall, husky Irish sergeant. The figure steadied itself by grasping the sergeant's helmet with his left hand. The sergeant steadied him by holding one right arm around his legs.

But there was no smile on the face of the thus transformed object. His chubby countenance was one of easily understood concern. He was not a day over sixteen years and this was quite some experience for him. He was one of the German prisoners and these happy youngsters from across the seas were bringing him in almost with as much importance as though he had been a football hero. He was unhurt and it was unnecessary to carry him, but this tribute was voluntarily added, not only as an indication of extreme interest, but to reassure the juvenile captive of the kindly intentions of his captors.

"Jiggers, here's the Colonel's dugout," one voice shouted. "Put him down to walk, now."

The big sergeant acted on the suggestion and the little Fritz was lowered to the ground. He immediately caught step with the big sergeant and took up the latter's long stride with his short legs and feet encased in clumsy German boots. His soiled uniform had been the German field grey green. His helmet was gone but he wore well back on his head the flat round cloth cap. With his fat cheeks he looked like a typical baker's boy, and one almost expected to see him carrying a tray of rolls on his head.

"For the luva Mike, Tim," shouted an ambulance man, "do you call that a prisoner?"

"Sure he does look like a half portion," replied Sergeant Tim with a smile. "We got two hundred francs for a whole one. I don't know what we can cash this one in for."

"He ought to be worth more," some one said; "that barrage cost a million dollars. He's the million dollar baby of the raid."

"Sergeant, I'm not kidding," came one serious voice. "Why turn him in as a prisoner? I like the kid's looks. Why can't we keep him for the company mascot?"

The discussion ended when the Sergeant and his small charge disappeared in the Colonel's quarters for the inevitable questioning that all prisoners must go through. Several wounded were lying on the stretchers in front of the first aid dugout waiting for returning ambulances and passing the time meanwhile by smoking cigarettes and explaining how close each of them had been to the shell that exploded and "got 'em."

But little of the talk was devoted to themselves. They were all praise for the little chaplain from New England who, without arms, went over the top with "his boys" and came back with them. It was their opinion that their regiment had some sky pilot. And it was mine, also.

CHAPTER XIV

ON LEAVE IN PARIS

"So this—is Paris,"—this observation spoken in mock seriousness, in a George Cohan nasal drawl and accompanied by a stiff and stagy wave of the arm, was the customary facetious pass-word with which American soldiers on leave or on mission announced their presence in the capital of France.

Paris, the beautiful—Paris, the gay—Paris, the historical—Paris, the artistic—Paris, the only Paris, opened her arms to the American soldier and proceeded toward his enlightenment and entertainment on the sole policy that nothing was too good for him.

I saw the first American soldiers under arms reach Paris. It was early in the morning of July 3rd, 1917, when this first American troop train pulled into the Gare d'Austerlitz. It was early in the morning, yet Paris was there to give them a welcome. The streets outside the station were jammed with crowds. They had seen Pershing; they had seen our staff officers and headquarters details, but now they wanted to see the type of our actual fighting men—they wanted to see the American poilus —the men who were to carry the Stars and Stripes over the top.

The men left the cars and lined up in the station yard. It had been a long, fifteen hour night ride and the cramped quarters of the troop train had permitted but little sleep. There was no opportunity for them to breakfast or wash before they were put on exhibition. Naturally, they were somewhat nervous.

The standing line was ordered to produce its mess cups and hold them forward. Down the line came a bevy of pretty French girls, wearing the uniform of Red Cross nurses. They carried canisters of black coffee and baskets of cigarettes. They ladled out steaming cupfuls of the black liquid to the men. The incident gave our men their first surprise.

Rum or alcohol has never been a part of the United States army ration. In the memory of the oldest old-timers in the ranks of our old regular army, "joy water" had never been issued. On the other hand, its use had always been strictly forbidden in the company messes. Our men never expected it. Thus it was that, with no other idea occurring to them, they extended their mess cups to be filled with what they thought was simply strong hot coffee. Not one of them had the slightest suspicion that the French cooks who had prepared that coffee for their new American brothers in arms, had put a stick in it—had added just that portion of cognac which they had considered necessary to open a man's eyes and make him pick up his heels after a long night in a troop train.

I watched one old-timer in the ranks as he lifted the tin cup to his lips and took the initial gulp. Then he lowered the cup. Across his face there dawned first an expression of curious suspicion, then a look of satisfied recognition, and then a smile of pleased surprise, which he followed with an audible smacking of the lips. He finished the cup and allowed quite casually that he could stand another.

"So this is Paris,"—well, it wasn't half bad to start with. With that "coffee" under their belts, the men responded snappily to the march order, and in column of four, they swung into line and moved out of the station

yard, at the heels of their own band, which played a stirring marching air.

Paris claimed them for her own. All that the war had left of Paris' gay life, all the lights that still burned, all the music that still played, all the pretty smiles that had never been reduced in their quality or quantity, all that Paris had to make one care-free and glad to be alive—all belonged that day to that pioneer band of American infantrymen.

The women kissed them on the street. Grey-headed men removed their hats to them and shook their hands and street boys followed in groups at their heels making the air ring with shrill "Vive's." There were not many of them, only three companies. The men looked trim and clean-cut. They were tall and husky-looking and the snap with which they walked was good to the eyes of old Paris that loves verve.

With a thirty-two-inch stride that made their following admirers stretch their legs, the boys in khaki marched from the Austerlitz station to the Neuilly barracks over a mile away, where they went into quarters. Paris was in gala attire. In preparation for the celebration of the following day, the shop windows and building fronts were decked with American flags.

Along the line of march, traffic piled up at the street intersections and the gendarmes were unable to prevent the crowds from overflowing the sidewalks and pressing out into the streets where they could smile their greetings and throw flowers at closer range. A sergeant flanking a column stopped involuntarily when a woman on the curb reached out, grabbed his free hand, and kissed it. A snicker ran through the platoon as the sergeant, with face red beneath the tan, withdrew his hand and recaught his

step. He gave the snickering squads a stern, "Eyes front!" and tried to look at ease.

How the bands played that day! How the crowds cheered! How the flags and handkerchiefs and hats waved in the air, and how thousands of throats volleyed the "Vive's!" This was the reception of our first fighting men. But on the following day they received even a greater demonstration, when they marched through the streets of the city on parade, and participated in the first Parisian celebration of American Independence Day.

Parisians said that never before had Paris shown so many flags, not even during the days three years before, when the sons of France had marched away to keep the Germans out of Paris. It seemed that the customary clusters of Allied flags had been almost entirely replaced for the day by groups composed solely of the French tricolour and the Stars and Stripes. Taxis and fiacres flew flags and bunting from all attachable places. Flag venders did wholesale business on the crowded streets. Street singers sang patriotic parodies, eulogising Uncle Sam and his nephews, and garnered harvests of sous for their efforts.

The three companies of our regulars marched with a regiment of French colonials, all veterans of the war and many of them incapacitated for front service through wounds and age. French soldiers on leave from the trenches and still bearing the mud stains of the battle front life, cheered from the sidewalks. Bevies of midinettes waved their aprons from the windows of millinery shops. Some of them shouted, "Vive les Teddies!" America—the great, good America—the sister republic from across the seas was spoken of and shouted all day long. Paris capitulated unconditionally to three companies of American infantry.

From that day on, every American soldier visiting Paris has been made to feel himself at home. And the unrestricted hospitality did not seem to be the result of an initial wave of enthusiasm. It was continuous. For months afterward, any one wearing an American uniform along the boulevards could hear behind him dulcet whispers that carried the words *très gentil.*

At first, our enlisted men on leave in Paris or detailed for work in the city, were quartered in the old Pipincerie Barracks, where other soldiers from all of the Allied armies in the world were quartered. Our men mingled with British Tommies, swarthy Italians and Portuguese, tall blond Russians, French poilus, Canadians, Australians and New Zealanders. At considerable expense to these comrades in arms, our men instructed them in the all-American art of plain and fancy dice rolling.

Later when our numbers in Paris increased, other arrangements for housing were made. The American policing of Paris, under the direction of the Expeditionary Provost General, Brigadier General Hillaire, was turned over to the Marines. Whether it was that our men conducted themselves in Paris with the orderliness of a guest at the home of his host, or whether it was that the Marines with their remarkable discipline suppressed from all view any too hearty outbursts of American exuberance, it must be said that the appearance and the bearing of American soldiers in Paris were always above reproach.

I have never heard of one being seen intoxicated in Paris, in spite of the fact that more opportunities presented themselves for drinking than had ever before been presented to an American army. The privilege of sitting at a table in front of a sidewalk café on a busy boulevard and drinking a small glass of beer unmolested, was one

that our men did not take advantage of. It was against the law to serve any of the stronger liqueurs to men in uniform, but beer and light wines were obtainable all the time. All cafés closed at 9:30. In spite of the ever present opportunity to obtain beverages of the above character, there was many and many an American soldier who tramped the boulevards and canvassed the cafés, drug stores and delicatessen shops in search of a much-desired inexistent, ice cream soda.

Many of our men spent their days most seriously and most studiously, learning the mysteries of transportation on the busses and the Paris underground system, while they pored over their guide books and digested pages of information concerning the points of interest that Paris had to offer. Holidays found them shuffling through the tiled corridors of the Invalides or looking down into the deep crypt at the granite tomb of the great Napoleon. In the galleries of the Louvre, the gardens of the Tuilleries, or at the Luxembourg, the American uniform was ever present. At least one day out of every ten day leave was spent in the palace and the grounds at Versailles.

The theatres of Paris offered a continual change of amusement. One of the most popular among these was the Folies Bergères. Some of our men didn't realise until after they entered the place that it was a French theatre. Due to the French pronunciation of the name, some of the American soldiers got the idea that it was a saloon run by an Irishman by the name of Foley. "Bergère" to some was unpronounceable, so the Folies Bergères was most popularly known in our ranks as "Foley's place."

Another popular amusement place was the Casino de Paris, where an echo from America was supplied by an American negro jazz band, which dispensed its questionable music in the *promenoir* during the intermission.

There were five negroes in the orchestra and each one of them seemed to have an ardent dislike for the remaining four. Individually they manifested their mutual contempt by turning their backs on one another while they played. Strange as it may seem, a most fascinating type of harmony resulted, producing much swaying of shoulders, nodding of heads and snapping of fingers among the American soldiers in the crowd. French men and women, with their old world musical taste, would consider the musical gymnastics of the demented drummer in the orchestra, then survey the swaying Americans and come to the conclusion that the world had gone plumb to hell.

All types of American soldiers made Paris their mecca as soon as the desired permissions had been granted. One day I sat opposite a remarkable type whom I found dining in a small restaurant. I noticed the absence of either beer or wine with his meal, and he frankly explained that he had never tasted either in his life. He thanked me, but refused to accept a cigarette I offered, saying without aside that he had yet his first one to smoke. When I heard him tell Madame that he did not care for coffee, I asked him why, and he told me that his mother had always told him it was injurious and he had never tasted it.

I became more interested in this ideal, young American soldier and questioned him about his life. I found that he and his father had worked in the copper mines in Michigan. They were both strong advocates of union labour and had participated vigorously in the bloody Michigan strikes.

"Father and I fought that strike clear through," he said. "Our union demands were just. Here in this war I am fighting just the same way as we fought against

the mine operators in Michigan. I figure it out that Germany represents low pay, long hours and miserable working conditions for the world. I think the Kaiser is the world's greatest scab. I am over here to help get him."

One day in the Chatham Hotel, in Paris, I was dining with an American Brigadier General, when an American soldier of the ranks approached the table. At a respectful distance of five feet, the soldier halted, clicked his heels and saluted the General. He said, "Sir, the orderly desires permission to take the General's car to headquarters and deliver the packages."

"All right, Smith," replied the General, looking at his watch. "Find out if my other uniform is back yet and then get back here yourself with the car in half an hour."

"Thank you, sir," replied the man as he saluted, executed a snappy right about face and strode out of the dining-room.

"Strange thing about that chauffeur of mine," said the General to me. "I had a lot of extra work yesterday on his account. I had to make out his income tax returns. He and his dad own almost all the oil in Oklahoma. When he paid his income tax, Uncle Sam got a little over a hundred thousand dollars. He went in the army in the ranks. He is only an enlisted private now, but he's a good one."

Walking out of the Gare du Nord one day, I saw a man in an American uniform and a French Gendarme vainly trying to talk with each other. The Frenchman was waving his arms and pointing in various directions and the American appeared to be trying to ask questions. With the purpose of offering my limited knowledge of

French to straighten out the difficulty, I approached the pair and asked the American soldier what he wanted. He told me but I don't know what it was to this day. He spoke only Polish.

It was not alone amidst the gaiety of Paris that our soldiers spread the fame of America. In the peaceful countrysides far behind the flaming fronts, the Yankee fighting men won their way into the hearts of the French people. Let me tell you the story of a Christmas celebration in a little French village in the Vosges.

Before dawn there were sounds of movement in the murky half-light of the village street. A long line of soldiers wound their way past flaming stoves of the mess shacks, where the steaming coffee took the chill out of the cold morning stomachs.

Later the sun broke bright and clear. It glistened on the snow-clad furrows of the rolling hills, in which, for centuries, the village of Saint Thiébault has drowsed more or less happily beside its ancient canal and in the shadow of the steeple of the church of the good Saint Thiébault.

Now a thousand men or more, brown-clad and metal-helmeted, know the huts and stables of Saint Thiébault as their billets, and the seventy little boys and girls of the parish know those same thousand men as their new big brothers—*les bons Americains.*

The real daddies and big brothers and uncles of those seventy youngsters have been away from Saint Thiébault for a long time now—yes, this is the fourth Christmas that the urgent business in northern France has kept them from home. They may never return but that is unknown to the seventy young hopefuls.

There was great activity in the colonel's quarters dur-

MARINES MARCHING DOWN THE AVENUE PRESIDENT WILSON ON THE FOURTH OF JULY IN PARIS

BRIDGE CROSSING MARNE RIVER IN CHATEAU-THIERRY DESTROYED BY GERMANS IN THEIR RETREAT FROM TOWN

ing the morning, and it is said that a sleuthing seventy were intent on unveiling the mystery of these unusual American preparations. They stooped to get a peep through the windows of the room, and Private Larson, walking his post in front of the sacred precincts, had to shoo them away frequently with threatening gestures and Swedish-American-French commands, such as "Allay veet—Allay veet t'ell outer here."

An energetic bawling from the headquarters cook shack indicated that one juvenile investigator had come to grief. Howls emanated from little Paul Laurent, who could be seen stumbling across the road, one blue, cold hand poking the tears out of his eyes and the other holding the seat of his breeches.

Tony Moreno, the company cook, stood in front of the cook shack shaking a soup ladle after the departing Paul and shouting imprecations in Italian-American.

"Tam leetle fool!" shouted Tony as he returned to the low camp stove and removed a hot pan, the surface of whose bubbling contents bore an unmistakable imprint. "Deese keeds make me seek. I catcha heem wit de finger in de sugar barrel. I shout at heem. He jumpa back. He fall over de stove and sita down in de pan of beans. He spoila de mess. He burn heese pants. Tam good!"

And over there in front of the regimental wagon train picket line, a gesticulating trio is engaged in a three cornered Christmas discussion. One is M. Lecompte, who is the uniformed French interpreter on the Colonel's staff, and he is talking to "Big" Moriarity, the teamster, the tallest man in the regiment. The third party to the triangle is little Pierre Lafite, who clings to M. Lecompte's hand and looks up in awe at the huge Irish soldier.

"He wants to borrow one of these," M. Lecompte says,

pointing to the enormous hip boots which Moriarity is wearing.

"He wants to borrow one of me boots?" repeated the Irishman. "And for the love of heavin, what would he be after doin' wid it? Sure and the top of it is higher than the head of him."

"It is for this purpose," explains the interpreter. "The French children do not hang up their stockings for Christmas. Instead they place their wooden shoes on the hearth and the presents and sweets are put in them. You see, Pierre desires to receive a lot of things."

"Holy Mother!" replies Moriarity, kicking off one boot and hopping on one foot toward the stables. "Take it, you scamp, and I hopes you get it filled wid dimonds and gold dust. But mind ye, if you get it too near the fire and burn the rubber I'll eat you like you was a oyster."

The Irish giant emphasised his threat with a grimace of red-whiskered ferocity and concluded by loudly smacking his lips. Then little Pierre was off to his mother's cottage, dragging the seven league boot after him.

With the afternoon meal, the last of the packages had been tied with red cords and labelled, and the interior of the Colonel's quarters looked like an express office in the rush season. The packages represented the purchases made with 1,300 francs which the men of the battalion had contributed for the purpose of having Christmas come to Saint Thiébault in good style.

M. Lecompte has finished sewing the red and white covering which is to be worn by "Hindenburg," the most docile mule in the wagon train, upon whom has fallen the honour of drawing the present loaded sleigh of the Christmas saint.

"Red" Powers, the shortest, fattest and squattiest man

in the battalion, is investing himself with baggy, red garments, trimmed with white fur and tassels, all made out of cloth by hands whose familiarity with the needle has been acquired in bayonet practice. Powers has donned his white wig and whiskers and his red cap. tasseled in white. He is receiving his final instructions from the colonel.

"You may grunt, Powers," the colonel is saying, "but don't attempt to talk French with that Chicago accent. We don't want to frighten the children. And remember, you are not Santa Claus. You are Papa Noel. That's what the French children call Santa Claus."

It is three o'clock, and the regimental band, assembled in marching formation in the village street, blares out "I Wish I Were in the Land of Cotton," and there is an outpouring of children, women and soldiers from every door on the street. The colonel and his staff stand in front of their quarters opposite the band, and a thousand American soldiers, in holiday disregard for formation, range along either side of the street.

The large wooden gate of the stable yard, next to the commandant's quarters, swings open; there is a jingle of bells, and "Hindenburg," resplendent in his fittings, and Papa Noel Powers sitting high on the package-heaped sleigh, move out into the street. Their appearance is met with a crash of cymbals, the blare of the band's loudest brass, and the happy cries of the children and the deeper cheers of the men.

Christmas had come to Saint Thiébault. Up the street went the procession, the band in the lead playing a lively jingling piece of music well matched to the keenness of the air and the willingness of young blood to tingle with the slightest inspiration.

"Hindenburg," with a huge pair of tin spectacles gog-

gling his eyes, tossed his head and made the bells ring all over his gala caparison. Papa Noel, mounted on the pyramid of presents, bowed right and left and waved his hands to the children, to the soldiers, to the old men and the old women.

As the youngsters followed in the wake of the sleigh, the soldiers picked them up and carried them on their shoulders, on "piggy" back, or held them out so they could shake hands with Papa Noel and hear that dignitary gurgle his appreciation in wonderful north pole language.

When Papa Noel found out that he could trust the flour paste and did not have to hold his whiskers on by biting them, he gravely announced, "Wee, wee," to all the bright-eyed, red-cheeked salutations directed his way.

The band halted in front of the ancient church of Saint Thiébault, where old Father Gabrielle stood in the big doorway, smiling and rubbing his hands. Upon his invitation the children entered and were placed in the first row of chairs, the mothers, grandmothers, grandfathers, and young women sat in back of them, and further back sat the regimental officers. The soldiers filled the rest of the church to the doors.

The brief ceremony ended with a solemn benediction and then the curtains were drawn back from one of the arches in front of and to the left of the main altar.

There stood Saint Thiébault's first Christmas tree, or at least the first one in four years. It was lighted with candles and was resplendent with decorations that represented long hours of work with shears and paste on the part of unaccustomed fingers. Suggestions from a thousand Christmas minds were on that tree, and the result showed it. The star of Bethlehem, made of tinsel, glistened in the candlelight.

Not even the inbred decorum of the church was sufficient to restrain the involuntary expressions of admiration of the saint by the seventy youngsters. They oh-ed and ah-ed and pointed, but they enjoyed it not a whit more than did the other children in the church, some of whose ages ran to three score and more.

Papa Noel walked down the centre aisle leading a file of soldiers, each of whom carried a heaping armful of packages. Young necks craned and eyes bulged as the packages were deposited on the tables in front of the communion rail. M. Lecompte raised his hands for silence and spoke.

"These Americans," he said, "have come to our country to march and to fight side by side with your fathers and your big brothers and your uncles and all the men folk who have been away from Saint Thiébault so long. These Americans want to take their places for you to-day. These Americans in doing these things for you are thinking of their own little girls and little boys away back across the ocean who are missing their fathers and big brothers and uncles to-day, just the same as you miss yours."

There were wet eyes among the women and some of the older men in khaki closed their eyes and seemed to be transporting themselves thousands of miles away to other scenes and other faces. But the reverie was only for a minute.

M. Lecompte began calling the names for the distribution of gifts and the children of Saint Thiébault began their excited progress toward the tables. Here Papa Noel delivered the prized packages.

"For Marie Louise Larue," said M. Lecompte, "a hair ribbon of gold and black with a tortoise bandeau."

"For Gaston Ponsot, a toy cannon that shoots and six German soldiers at least to shoot."

"For Colette Daville, a warm cape of red cloth with a collar of wool."

"For Alphonse Bénois, an aeroplane that flies on a string."

"For Eugenie Fontaine, a doll that speaks."

"For Emilie Moreau, a pair of shoes with real leather soles and tops."

"For Camille Laurent, red mittens of wool and a sheepskin muff."

"For Jean Artois, a warship that moves and flies the American flag."

It continued for more than an hour. The promoters of the celebration were wise to their work. There was more than one present for each child. They did not know how many. Time after time, their names were called and they clattered forward in their wooden shoes for each new surprise.

The presents ran the range of toys, clothing, games, candies and nuts, but the joy was in sitting there and waiting for one's name to be called and going forward to partake of that most desirable "more."

Big Moriarity had his hands in the incident that served as a climax to the distribution. He had whispered something to M. Lecompte and the result was that one little duffer, who sat all alone on a big chair, and hugged an enormous rubber boot, waited and waited expectantly to hear the name "Pierre Lafite" called out.

All the other names had been called once and not his. He waited. All the names had been called twice and still not his. He waited through the third and the fourth calling in vain, and his chin was beginning to tremble

suspiciously as the fifth calling proceeded without the sound of his name.

The piles of packages on the tables had been getting smaller all the time. Then M. Lecompte pronounced the very last name.

"Pierre Lafite," he called.

Pierre's heart bounded as he slipped off the chair and started up the aisle dragging his big rubber boot. The rest of the children had returned to their seats. All the elders in the church were watching his progress.

"For Pierre Lafite," repeated M. Lecompte, holding up the enormous boot. "A pair of real leather shoes to fit in the foot of the boot." He placed them there.

"And a pair of stilts to fit in the leg of the boot." He so placed them.

"And a set of soldiers, twenty-four in number, with a general commanding, to go beside the stilts." He poured them into the boot.

"And a pair of gloves and a stocking cap to go on top of the soldiers.

"And a baseball and a bat to go on top of the gloves.

"And all the chinks to be filled up with nuts and figs, and sweets. *Voilà,* Pierre," and with these words, he had poured the sweetmeats in overflowing measure into the biggest hip boot in the regiment.

Amid the cheers of the men, led by big Moriarity, Pierre started toward his seat, struggling with the seven league boot and the wholesale booty, and satisfied with the realisation that in one haul he had obtained more than his companions in five.

Company B quartet sang "Down in a Coal Hole," and then, as the band struck up outside the church, all moved to the street. The sun had gone down, the early winter night had set in, and the sky was almost dark.

"Signal for the barrage," came the command in the darkness.

There were four simultaneous hisses of fire and four comets of flame sprang up from the ground. They broke far overhead in lurid green.

"Signal for enemy planes overhead," was the next command, and four more rockets mounted and ended their flights in balls of luminous red. Other commands, other signals, other rockets, other lights and flares and pistol star shells, enriched a pyrotechnical display which was economically combined with signal practice.

The red glare illuminated the upturned happy faces of American and French together. Our men learned to love the French people. The French people learned to love us.

CHAPTER XV

CHÂTEAU-THIERRY AND THE BOIS DE BELLEAU

I HAVE endeavoured to show in preceding chapters the development of the young American army in France from a mere handful of new troops up to the creation of units capable of independent action on the front. Only that intense and thorough training made it possible for our oversea forces to play the veteran part they did play in the great Second Battle of the Marne.

The battle developed as a third phase of the enemy's Western Front offensives of the year. The increasing strength of the American forces overseas forced Germany to put forth her utmost efforts in the forlorn hope of gaining a decision in the field before the Allied lines could have the advantage of America's weight.

On March 21st, the Germans had launched their first powerful offensive on a front of fifty miles from Arras to Noyon in Picardy and had advanced their lines from St. Quentin to the outskirts of Amiens.

On April 9th, the German hordes struck again in Flanders on a front of twenty miles from Lens northward to the River Lys and had cut into the Allied front as far as Armentières.

There followed what was considered an abnormal delay in the third act of the demonstration. It was known that the Germans were engaged in making elaborate arrangements for this mid-summer push. It was the enemy hope in this great offensive to strike a final effective blow against the hard-pressed Allied line before America's rising power could be thrown into the fight.

The blow fell on the morning of May 27th. The front selected for the assault was twenty-five miles in width, extending from the Ailette near Vauxaillon to the Aisne-Marne Canal near Brimont. The Prussian Crown Prince was the titular chief of the group of armies used in the assault. One of these forces was the army of General von Boehm, which before the attack had numbered only nine divisions and had extended from the Oise at Noyon to east of Craconne. The other army was that of General Fritz von Bülow, previously composed of eight divisions and supporting a front that extended from Craconne across the Rheims front to Suippe, near Auberive. On the day of the attack, these armies had been strengthened to twice their normal number of divisions, and subsequently captured German plans revealed that the enemy expected to use forty-five divisions or practically half a million men in the onslaught.

The battle began at dawn. It was directed against the weakly held French positions on the Chemin des Dames. It was preceded by a three hour bombardment of terrific intensity. The French defenders were outnumbered four to one. The Germans put down a rolling barrage that was two miles deep. It destroyed all wire communications and flooded battery emplacements and machine gun posts with every brand of poison gas known to German kultur. Dust and artificial smoke clouds separated the defenders into small groups and screened the attacking waves until they had actually penetrated the French positions.

The French fought hard to resist the enemy flood across the Chemin des Dames with its ground sacred with tragic memories, but a withdrawal was necessary. The French command was forced to order a retreat to the Aisne. Hard-fighting French divisions and some units

of the British Fifth Army, which had been badly hit in Picardy in March, made an orderly withdrawal southward.

On the second day of the fight the enemy made a strong thrust toward Soissons, and after keeping the city under continual bombardment, succeeded in overcoming all resistance and occupying the city on May 29th. On the first day of the attack alone, twelve thousand explosive, incendiary and poison gas shells were hurled in amongst the hospitals in Soissons. American ambulance units did heroic work in the removal of the wounded.

The Germans forced a crossing on the Aisne. On the following day, May 30th, they had crossed the Vesle River and had captured Fère-en-Tardenois. On the following day their victorious hordes had reached the Marne and were closing in on Château-Thierry.

Some idea of the terrific strength of the enemy offensive may be gained from a recapitulation which would show that in five days the Germans had pushed through five successive lines of Allied defence, and had penetrated more than twenty-five miles. On the first day, they had captured the Chemin des Dames, on the second day, they had overcome all resistance on the Aisne, on the third day, their forces, pushing southward, had crossed the Vesle River, on the fourth day, they had destroyed the lines of resistance along the Ourcq, on the fifth day, they had reached the Marne.

It was a crisis. The battle front formed a vast triangle with the apex pointing southward toward Paris. The west side of the triangle extended fifty miles northward from the Marne to the Oise near Noyon. The east side of the triangle ran north-eastward thirty miles to Rheims. The point of this new thrust at Paris rested on the north bank of the Marne at Château-Thierry. The enemy had

advanced to within forty miles of the capital of France; the fate of the Allied world hung in the balance.

Undoubtedly I am prejudiced, but I like to feel that I know the real reason why the German hordes stopped at Château-Thierry on the north bank of the Marne. To me that reason will always be this—because on the south bank of the Marne stood the Americans.

On that day and in that event there materialised the German fears which had urged them on to such great speed and violence. In the eleventh hour, there at the peak of the German thrust, there at the climax of Germany's triumphant advances, there at the point where a military decision for the enemy seemed almost within grasp, there and then the American soldier stepped into the breech to save the democracy of the world.

The Marne River makes a loop at this place and Château-Thierry lies on both banks. The Marne there is called a river, but it would hardly come up to the American understanding of the word. The waterway is more like a canal with banks built up with stone blocks. There are streets on either bank, and these being the principal streets of the town, are bordered with comparatively high buildings.

While the Germans were on the outskirts of the city, American forces had made brilliant counter attacks on both sides. To the west of Château-Thierry the German advance forces, seeking to penetrate Neuilly Wood, had been hurled back by our young troops. To the east of Château-Thierry the enemy had succeeded in crossing the Marne in the vicinity of Jaulgonne.

This operation was carried out by the German 36th Division. On the night of May 30th, at a point where the Marne looped northward eight miles to the east of

Château-Thierry, the enemy succeeded in putting a few men across the river.

Along the south bank of the river at that place, the Paris-Châlons ran through a number of deep cuts and one tunnel. The enemy took shelter in these natural protections. They suffered serious losses from the Allied artillery which also destroyed some of their pontoons across the river, but in spite of this, the Germans succeeded in re-enforcing the units on the south bank to the strength of about a battalion.

Almost at the same time, the French defenders at this place received re-enforcements from the Americans. Units of the 3rd United States Regular Division and the 28th U. S. Division, comprised largely of Pennsylvania National Guardsmen, were rushed forward from training areas, miles back of the line, where they were engaged in fitting themselves for line duty. These incompletely trained American units abandoned their bayonet-stabbing of gunny-sacks and make-believe warfare to rush forward into the real thing.

On June 2nd, these Americans, under command of French officers, began the counter attack to sweep the Germans back from the south bank. By that time the enemy had succeeded in putting twenty-two light bridges across the Marne and had established a strong bridge-head position with a number of machine guns and a strong force of men in the railway station on the south bank of the river opposite Jaulgonne.

This position was attacked frontally by the Americans and French. Our novices in battle were guilty of numerous so-called strategical blunders, but in the main purpose of killing the enemy, they proved irresistible. The Germans broke and ran. At the same time, the French artillery lowered a terrific barrage on the bridges

crossing the river, with the result that many of the fleeing enemy were killed and more drowned. Only thirty or forty escaped by swimming. One hundred of them threw down their arms and surrendered. The remainder of the battalion was wiped out. At the close of the engagement the Americans and the French were in full command of the south bank.

But it was in Château-Thierry itself that the Germans made their most determined effort to cross the river and get a footing on the south bank, and it was there, again, that their efforts were frustrated by our forces. On May 31st, American machine gun units, then in training seventy-five kilometres south of the Marne, were hurriedly bundled into motor lorries and rushed northward into Château-Thierry.

The Germans were advancing their patrols into the north side of the city. They were pouring down the streets in large numbers, with the evident purpose of crossing the bridges and establishing themselves on the south bank.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon of May 31st that those American machine gunners got their first glimpse of real war. That night while the German artillery raked the south bank of the river with high explosive shells, those Americans, shouldering their machine guns, marched into the city and took up defensive positions on the south bank of the river.

During the night many houses were turned into ruins. Shells striking the railroad station had caused it to burn. In the red glare our men saw the houses about them collapse under clouds of dust and débris. Under cover of darkness the Germans filtered through the streets on the north side of the river. The American machine gunners went into position in the windows of houses on the south

bank and in gardens between the houses, and from these positions it was possible to command all of the bridge approaches and streets leading to the river on the opposite side.

During the night, Lieutenant John T. Bissell, a young Pittsburgher but recently graduated from West Point, started across one of the bridges and reached the north bank with a squad of a dozen men and two machine guns. This little unit went into position in a place commanding the forked highways which converged not far from the northern approach of the iron bridge crossing the river. It was this unit's function to prevent the enemy advance from this direction. The unit was separated from its comrades on the south bank by the river and about two hundred yards. In spite of the fact that the enemy artillery intensified its shelling of the south bank, the American machine gunners remained at their posts without firing and played a waiting game.

With the coming of dawn the Germans began to make their rushes for the bridges. Small compact forces would dart forward carrying light machine guns and ammunition with them. They encountered a terrific burst of American fire and wilted in front of it. Those that survived crawled back to the shelter of protecting walls, where they were re-enforced with fresh units, and again the massed formations charged down the streets toward the bridges. The slaughter of Germans increased until the approaches were dotted with bodies of the enemy slain.

On June 1st, the Germans having consolidated positions on the hills commanding the city from the north, they directed a terrific artillery and machine gun fire into our exposed positions on the south bank, as well as the small posts still held on the north bank by Lieutenant

Bissell and his machine gunners. Although the position held by the little American group had long been considered untenable, the members of it stuck it out until nightfall, when they received orders to retire to the south bank. At the same time, French colonials which had held a position throughout the day on the north bank on the edge of the town, withdrew in accordance with the same plan. The retirement of both parties was covered by our machine gunners on the south bank, who poured a hot fire into the evacuated areas as the Germans began occupying them.

By 10:30 that night the completion of the movement was signalised by a terrific explosion, as the French colonials blew up one of the stone bridges over which they had withdrawn. But the destruction of the bridge had cut off the little band of Americans and left them almost surrounded by the enemy on the north bank of the river, which was now becoming strongly populated by the enemy. Through the darkness could be heard the sound of shuffling, hobnailed boots, and even above the crack of the guns there came the weird swish of the grey coats as they pushed forward in mass formations.

The little party of thirteen Americans dismantled their guns and, with each man carrying his allotted piece, they began working their way along the river bank toward the main bridge, where they discovered that the enemy was almost upon them. They immediately went into position behind the stone parapet on the very brink of the river, and, although in constant danger from the American fire that poured out from the south bank, they poured streams of lead point-blank into the advancing German ranks.

The Americans on the south bank were not aware of

the plight of the little party on the north bank. In spite of their losses, the Germans continued their grewsome rushes toward the approaches of the iron bridge across which our machine gunners were pouring a devastating fire. Lieutenant Bissell and his men made one effort to cross the bridge, but were forced to crawl back to shelter on the north bank, carrying with them three of their wounded. They found themselves between a cross-fire. Then Bissell, alone, approached as near as he dared, and the first intimation that the Americans on the south bank had of the fact that Americans were in front of them was when Lieutenant Cobey heard Bissell's voice calling his name. A cease fire order was immediately given and Bissell and his men rushed across the bridge, carrying their wounded with them.

On the following day the Germans were in occupation of all the houses facing the north bank of the river, and could be seen from time to time darting from one shelter to another. Throughout the day their artillery maintained a terrific downpour of shells on the positions held by our men on the south bank. So intense was the rifle fire and activity of snipers, that it meant death to appear in the open. The Americans manned their guns throughout the day, but refrained from indulging in machine gun fire because it was not desired to reveal the locations of the guns. Nightfall approached with a quiet that was deadly ominous of impending events.

At nine o'clock the enemy formations lunged forward to the attack. Their dense masses charged down the streets leading toward the river. They sang as they advanced. The orders, as revealed in documents captured later, came straight from the high command and demanded the acquisition of a foothold on the south bank

at all costs. They paid the costs, but never reached the south bank.

The American machine gun fire was withering. Time after time, in the frequent rushes throughout the night, the remnants of enemy masses would reach sometimes as far as the centre of the big bridge, but none of them succeeded in reaching the south bank. The bridge became carpeted with German dead and wounded. They lay thick in the open streets near the approaches. By morning their dead were piled high on the bridge and subsequent rushes endeavoured to advance over the bodies of their fallen comrades. In this battle of the bridges and the streets, our men showed a courage and determination which aroused the admiration of the French officers, who were aware by this time that forty-eight hours before these same American soldiers had seen battle for the first time.

Our machine gunners turned the northern bank of the river into a No Man's Land. Their vigilance was unrelenting and every enemy attempt to elude it met with disaster. There were serious American casualties during that terrific fire, but they were nothing in comparison with the thousand or more German dead that dotted the streets and clogged the runways of the big bridge in piles. The last night of the fight enormous charges of explosive were placed beneath the bridge and discharged.

The bridge was destroyed. High into the air were blown bits of stone, steel, timber, débris, wreckage and the bodies of German dead, all to fall back into the river and go bobbing up and down in the waters of the Marne.

Thus did the Americans save the day at Château-Thierry, but it became immediately necessary for the French high command to call upon our young forces for another great effort. In response to this call, the Second

United States Division, including one brigade of the United States Marines, the 5th and 6th Regiments, started for the front. The division was then occupying support positions in the vicinity of Gisors behind the Picardy line. At four o'clock on the morning of May 31st the Marine brigade and regiments of United States infantry, the 9th and the 23rd Regulars, boarded camions, twenty to thirty men and their equipment in each vehicle.

They were bound eastward to the valley of the Marne. The road took them through the string of pretty villages fifteen miles to the north of Paris. The trucks loaded with United States troops soon became part of the endless traffic of war that was pouring northward and eastward toward the raging front. Our men soon became coated with the dust of the road. The French people in the villages through which they passed at top speed cheered them and threw flowers into the lorries.

Between Meaux and Château-Thierry, where the road wound along the Marne, our men encountered long trains of French refugees, weary mothers carrying hungry babies at the breast, farm wagons loaded with household belongings, usually surmounted by feather mattresses on which rode grey-haired grandfathers and grandmothers. This pitiful procession was moving toward the rear driving before it flocks of geese and herds of cattle. On the other side of the road war, grim war, moved in the opposite direction.

The Second Division was bound for the line to the northwest of Château-Thierry. On June 1st, the 6th Marines relieved the French on the support lines. The sector of the 6th Regiment joined on the left the sector held by two battalions of the 5th. The line on the right was held by the French. On June 2nd, the hard-pressed French line, weak and weary from continual rear guard

actions, over a hard fighting period of almost a week, fell back by prearranged plan and passed through the support positions which we held. To fill gaps between units, the Marines extended their brigade sector to between twelve and fourteen kilometres. As the French withdrew to the rear, hard pressed by the enemy, the Marines held the new first line.

The regimental headquarters of the 6th was located in a stone farmhouse at a cross-roads called La Voie Châtel, situated between the villages of Champillon and Lucy-le-Bocage. There was clear observation from that point toward the north. At five o'clock in the afternoon on that day of clear visibility, the Germans renewed their attacks from the north and northeast toward a position called Hill 165, which was defended by the 5th Regiment.

The Germans advanced in two solid columns across a field of golden wheat. More than half of the two columns had left the cover of the trees and were moving in perfect order across the field when the shrapnel fire from the American artillery in the rear got range on the target. Burst after burst of white smoke suddenly appeared in the air over the column, and under each burst the ground was marked with a circle of German dead. It was not barrage fire: it was individual firing against two individual moving targets and its success spoke well for the training which that brigade of American artillery had received.

French aviators from above directed the fire of our guns, and from high in the air signalled down their "bravos" in congratulation on the excellent work. At the same time, the machine gunners of the 5th covered the ravines and wooded clumps with a hot fire to prevent small bodies of the enemy from infiltrating through

our lines. The French marvelled at the deliberateness and accuracy of our riflemen.

The Germans, unaware that a change had taken place in the personnel that faced them, reeled back demoralised and unable to understand how such a sudden show of resistance had been presented by the weakened French troops which they had been driving before them for a week. The enemy's advance had been made openly and confidently in the mistaken flush of victory. Their triumphant advances of the previous week had more than supported the statements of the German officers, who had told their men that they were on the road to Paris—the end of the war and peace. It was in this mood of victory that the enemy encountered the Marines' stone wall and reeled back in surprise.

That engagement, in addition to lowering the enemy morale, deprived them of their offensive spirit and placed them on the defensive. The next few days were spent in advancing small strong points and the strengthening of positions. In broad daylight one group of Marines rushed a German machine gun pit in the open, killed or wounded every man in the crew, disabled the gun and got back to their lines in safety.

It was at five o'clock on the bright afternoon of June 6th that the United States Marines began to carve their way into history in the battle of the Bois de Belleau. Major General Harbord, former Chief of Staff to General Pershing, was in command of the Marine brigade. Orders were received for a general advance on the brigade front. The main objectives were the eastern edge of the Bois de Belleau and the towns of Bussiares, Torcy and Bouresches.

Owing to the difficulty of liaison in the thickets of the wood, and because of the almost impossible task of di-

recting it in conjunction with the advancing lines, the artillery preparation for the attack was necessarily brief. At five o'clock to the dot the Marines moved out from the woods in perfect order, and started across the wheat fields in four long waves. It was a beautiful sight, these men of ours going across those flat fields toward the tree clusters beyond from which the Germans poured a murderous machine gun fire.

The woods were impregnated with nests of machine guns, but our advance proved irresistible. Many of our men fell, but those that survived pushed on through the woods, bayoneting right and left and firing as they charged. So sweeping was the advance that in some places small isolated units of our men found themselves with Germans both before and behind them.

The enemy put up a stubborn resistance on the left, and it was not until later in the evening that this part of the line reached the northeast edge of the woods, after it had completely surrounded a most populous machine gun nest which was located on a rocky hill. During the fighting Colonel Catlin was wounded and Captain Laspierre, the French liaison officer, was gassed, two casualties which represented a distinct blow to the brigade, but did not hinder its further progress.

On the right Lieutenant Robertson, with twenty survivors out of his entire platoon, emerged from the terrific enemy barrage and took the town of Bouresches at the point of the bayonet. Captain Duncan, receiving word that one Marine company, with a determination to engage the enemy in hand-to-hand combat, had gone two hundred yards in advance, raced forward on the double quick with the 96th Marine Company, and was met by a terrific machine gun barrage from both sides of Bouresches.

Lieutenant Robertson, looking back, saw Duncan and the rest of his company going down like flies as they charged through the barrage. He saw Lieutenant Bowling get up from the ground, his face white with pain, and go stumbling ahead with a bullet in his shoulder. Duncan, carrying a stick and with his pipe in his mouth, was mowed down in the rain of lead. Robertson saw Dental Surgeon Osborne pick Duncan up. With the aid of a Hospital Corps man, they had just gained the shelter of some trees when a shell wiped all three of them out.

In the street fighting that ensued in Bouresches, Lieutenant Robertson's orderly, Private Dunlavy, who was later killed in the defence of the town, captured one of the enemy's own machine guns and turned it against them.

In the dense woods the Germans showed their mastery of machine gun manipulation and the method of infiltration by which they would place strong units in our rear and pour in a deadly fire. Many of these guns were located on rocky ridges, from which they could fire to all points. These Marines worked with reckless courage against heavy odds, and the Germans exacted a heavy toll for every machine gun that was captured or disabled, but in spite of losses the Marine advance continued.

Lieutenant Overton, commanding the 76th Company, made a brilliant charge against a strong German position at the top of a rocky hill. He and his men captured all of the guns and all of their crews. Overton was hit later when the Germans retaliated by a concentration of fire against the captured position for forty-eight hours.

Lieutenant Robertson, according to the report brought back by a regimental runner, was last seen flat on a rock not twenty yards away from one enemy gun, at which

he kept shooting with an automatic in each hand. He was hit three times before he consented to let his men carry him to the rear.

"There was not an officer left in the 82nd Company," according to a letter by Major Frank E. Evans, Adjutant of the Sixth. "Major Sibley and his Adjutant reorganised them under close fire and led them in a charge that put one particular machine gun nest out of business at the most critical time in all the fighting. I heard later that at that stage some one said: 'Major Sibley ordered that—' and another man said: 'Where in hell is Sibley?' Sibley was twenty yards away at that time and a hush went down the line when they saw him step out to lead the charge.

"And when the word got around through that dead-tired, crippled outfit that 'the Old Man' was on the line, all hell could not have stopped that rush."

In such fashion did the Marines go through the Bois de Belleau. Their losses were heavy, but they did the work. The sacrifice was necessary. Paris was in danger. The Marines constituted the thin line between the enemy and Paris. The Marines not only held that line—they pushed it forward.

The fighting was terrific. In one battalion alone the casualties numbered sixty-four per cent. officers and sixty-four per cent. men. Several companies came out of the fighting under command of their first sergeants, all of the officers having been killed or wounded.

I witnessed some of that fighting. I was with the Marines at the opening of the battle. I never saw men charge to their death with finer spirit. I am sorry that wounds prevented me from witnessing the victorious conclusion of the engagement. In view of my subsequent absence from the fight, I wish to give credit and thanks

at this place to Major Frank E. Evans, who as Adjutant of the 6th Regiment of Marines, provided me with much of the foregoing material which occurred while I was in the hospital.

The bravery of that Marine brigade in the Bois de Belleau fight will ever remain a bright chapter in the records of the American Army. For the performance of deeds of exceptional valour, more than a hundred Marines were awarded Distinguished Service Crosses. General Pershing, in recognition of the conduct of the Second Division, issued the following order:

"It is with inexpressible pride and satisfaction that your commander recounts your glorious deeds on the field of battle. In the early days of June on a front of twenty kilometres, after night marches and with only the reserve rations which you carried, you stood like a wall against the enemy advance on Paris. For this timely action you have received the thanks of the French people whose homes you saved and the generous praise of your comrades in arms.

"Since the organisation of our sector, in the face of strong opposition, you have advanced your lines two kilometres on a front of eight kilometres. You have engaged and defeated with great loss three German divisions and have occupied important strong points—Belleau Wood, Bouresches, and Vaux. You have taken about 1,400 prisoners, many machine guns, and much other material. The complete success of the infantry was made possible by the splendid co-operation of the artillery, by the aid and assistance of the engineer and signal troops, by the diligent and watchful care of the medical and supply services, and by the unceasing work

of the well-organised staff. All elements of the division have worked together as a well-trained machine.

"Amid the dangers and trials of battle, every officer and every man has done well his part. Let the stirring deeds, hardships, and sacrifices of the past month remain forever a bright spot in our history. Let the sacred memory of our fallen comrades spur us on to renewed effort and to the glory of American arms."

All of the German prisoners captured by the Marines in the Bois de Belleau could express only surprise over the fighting capacity of their captors. Prisoners' statements are not entirely trustworthy, but here is one that was not intended for American consumption. It was written by a German soldier, who was killed in the Bois de Belleau before he had an opportunity to mail it. It was removed from his body. It reads:

"France, June 21, 1918.

"We are now in the battle zone and canteens dare not come to us on account of the enemy, for the Americans are bombarding the villages fifteen kilometres behind the present front with long-range guns, and you will know that the canteen outfit and the others who are lying in reserve do not venture very far, for it is not 'pleasant to eat cherries' with the Americans. The reason for that is that they have not yet had much experience. The American divisions are still too fiery. They are the first divisions that the French have entered. . . . We will also show the Americans how good we are, for the day before yesterday we bombarded them heavily with our gas. About 400 of us are lying around here. We have one corner of the woods and the American has the other corner. That is not nice, for all of a sudden he rushes

forward and one does not know it beforehand. Therefore, one must shoot at every little noise, for one cannot trust them. Here always two men have dug a hold for themselves. Here one lies day and night without a blanket, only with a coat and a shelter-half. One freezes at night like a tailor, for the nights are fiercely cold. I hope that I will be lucky enough to escape from this horrible mess, for up to now I have always been lucky. Many of my comrades are already buried here. The enemy sweeps every evening the whole countryside with machine gun and rifle fire, and then artillery fire. But we in front line are safer than in the support position. At present our food is miserable. We are now fed upon dried vegetables and marmalade and when at night we obtain more food it is unpalatable. It is half sour and all cold. In the daytime we receive nothing."

But it might be wise to support this statement from a German soldier in the ranks by excerpts from an official German army report which was captured July 7th on a German officer. The document was a carefully weighed treatise on the fighting capacity of the United States Marines. The document had the following heading:

"Intelligence Officer of the Supreme Command at Army Headquarters, Number 7, J. Number 3,528, Army Headquarters, June 17, 1917.

"Second American Infantry Division.

"Examination of Prisoners from the 5th, 6th, 9th and 23rd Regiments, captured from June 5th to 14th, in the Bouresches Sector."

After setting forth all information gained, concerning the purpose of attack and the arrival of the American

units on the line, the German Intelligence Report continues, as follows:

"The Second American Division may be classed as a very good division, perhaps even as assault troops. The various attacks of both regiments on Belleau Wood were carried out with dash and recklessness. The moral effect of our firearms did not materially check the advances of the enemy. The nerves of the Americans are still unshaken.

"VALUE OF THE INDIVIDUAL—the individual soldiers are very good They are healthy, vigorous, and physically well-developed men, of ages ranging from eighteen to twenty-eight, who at present lack only necessary training to make them redoubtable opponents. The troops are fresh and full of straightforward confidence. A remark of one of the prisoners is indicative of their spirit: 'We kill or get killed.'

"MORALE—the prisoners in general make an alert and pleasing impression. Regarding military matters, however, they do not show the slightest interest. Their superiors keep them purposely without knowledge of the military subjects. For example, most of them have never seen a map. They are no longer able to describe the villages and roads through which they marched. Their idea of the organisation of their unit is entirely confused. For example, one of them told us that his brigade had six regiments and his division twenty-four. They still regard the war from the point of view of the 'big brother' who comes to help his hard-pressed brethren and is therefore welcomed everywhere. A certain moral background is not lacking. The majority of the prisoners simply took as a matter of course that they have come to Europe to defend their country.

"Only a few of the troops are of pure American origin; the majority is of German, Dutch and Italian parentage, but these semi-Americans, almost all of whom were born in America and never have been in Europe before, fully feel themselves to be true born sons of their country.

(Signed) "Von Berg,
"Lieutenant and Intelligence Officer."

Since the days I read Hugo's chapters on the Battle of Waterloo in "Les Misérables," I always considered as an ideal of fighting capacity and the military spirit of sacrifice the old sergeant of Napoleon's Old Guard. Hugo made me vividly see that old sergeant standing on a field with a meagre remnant of the Old Guard gathered around him. Unable to resist further, but unwilling to accept surrender, he and his followers faced the British cannon. The British, respecting this admirable demonstration of courage, ceased firing and called out to them, "Brave Frenchmen, surrender."

The old sergeant, who was about to die, refused to accept this offer of his life from the enemy. Into the very muzzles of the British cannon the sergeant hurled back the offer of his life with one word. That word was the vilest epithet in the French language. The cannons roared and the old sergeant and his survivors died with the word on their lips. Hugo wisely devoted an entire chapter to that single word.

But I have a new ideal to-day. I found it in the Bois de Belleau. A small platoon line of Marines lay on their faces and bellies under the trees at the edge of a wheat field. Two hundred yards across that flat field the enemy was located in trees. I peered into the trees but could see nothing, yet I knew that every leaf in the foliage

screened scores of German machine guns that swept the field with lead. The bullets nipped the tops of the young wheat and ripped the bark from the trunks of the trees three feet from the ground on which the Marines lay. The minute for the Marine advance was approaching. An old gunnery sergeant commanded the platoon in the absence of the lieutenant, who had been shot and was out of the fight. This old sergeant was a Marine veteran. His cheeks were bronzed with the wind and sun of the seven seas. The service bar across his left breast showed that he had fought in the Philippines, in Santo Domingo, at the walls of Pekin, and in the streets of Vera Cruz. I make no apologies for his language. Even if Hugo were not my precedent, I would make no apologies. To me his words were classic, if not sacred.

As the minute for the advance arrived, he arose from the trees first and jumped out onto the exposed edge of that field that ran with lead, across which he and his men were to charge. Then he turned to give the charge order to the men of his platoon—his mates—the men he loved. He said:

"COME ON, YOU SONS-O'-BITCHES! DO YOU WANT TO LIVE FOREVER?"

CHAPTER XVI

WOUNDED—HOW IT FEELS TO BE SHOT

JUST how does it feel to be shot on the field of battle? Just what is the exact sensation when a bullet burns its way through your flesh or crashes through your bones?

I always wanted to know. As a police reporter I "covered" scores of shooting cases, but I could never learn from the victims what the precise feeling was as the piece of lead struck. For long years I had cherished an inordinate curiosity to know that sensation, if possible, without experiencing it. I was curious and eager for enlightenment just as I am still anxious to know how it is that some people willingly drink buttermilk when it isn't compulsory.

I am still in the dark concerning the inexplicable taste for the sour, clotted product of a sweet, well-meaning cow and the buttery, but I have found out how it feels to be shot. I know it now by experience.

Three Germans bullets that violated my person left me as many scars and at the same time completely satisfied my curiosity. I think now if I can ever muster up enough courage to drink a glass of buttermilk, I shall have bereft myself of my last inquisitiveness.

It happened on June 6th just to the northwest of Château-Thierry in the Bois de Belleau. On the morning of that day I left Paris by motor for a rush to the front. The Germans were on that day within forty miles of the capital of France. On the night before, the citizens of

Paris, in their homes and hotels, had heard the roll of the guns drawing ever nearer. Many had left the city.

But American divisions were in the line between the enemy and their goal, and the operation of these divisions was my object in hustling to the front. On the broad, paved highway from Paris to Meaux, my car passed miles and miles of loaded motor trucks bound frontward. Long lines of these carried thousands of Americans. Other long lines were loaded down with shells and cartridge boxes. On the right side of the road, bound for Paris and points back of the line, was an endless stream of ambulances and other motor trucks bringing back wounded. Dense clouds of dust hung like a pall over the length of the road. The day was hot, the dust was stifling.

From Meaux we proceeded along the straight highway that borders the south banks of the Marne to LaFerte, at which place we crossed the river and turned north to Montreuil, which was the newly occupied headquarters of the Second United States Army Division, General Omar Bundy commanding. On the day before, the two infantry brigades of that division, one composed of the 5th and 6th U. S. Marines, under command of Brigadier General Harbord, the other composed of the 9th and 23rd U. S. Infantry, had been thrown into the line which was just four miles to the north and east.

The fight had been hot during the morning. The Marines on the left flank of the divisional sector had been pushing their lines forward through triangle woods and the village of Lucy-le-Bocage. The information of their advances was given to me by the Divisional Intelligence officer, who occupied a large room in the rear of the building that was used as Divisional Headquarters. The building was the village *Mairie,* which also included

the village school-house. Now the desks of the school children were being used by our staff officers and the walls and blackboards were covered with maps.

I was accompanied by Lieutenant Oscar Hartzell, formerly of the *New York Times* staff. We learned that orders from the French High Command called for a continuation of the Marine advance during the afternoon and evening, and this information made it possible for us to make our plans. Although the Germans were shelling roads immediately behind the front, Lieutenant Hartzell and I agreed to proceed by motor from Montreuil a mile or so to a place called La Voie du Chatel, which was the headquarters of Colonel Neveille of the 5th Marines. Reaching that place around four o'clock, we turned a despatch over to the driver of our staff car with instructions that he proceed with all haste to Paris and there submit it to the U. S. Press Bureau.

Lieutenant Hartzell and I announced our intentions of proceeding at once to the front line to Colonel Neveille.

"Go wherever you like," said the regimental commander, looking up from the outspread maps on the kitchen table in the low-ceilinged stone farm-house that he had adopted as headquarters. "Go as far as you like, but I want to tell you it's damn hot up there."

An hour later found us in the woods to the west of the village of Lucy le Bocage, in which German shells were continually falling. To the west and north another nameless cluster of farm dwellings was in flames. Huge clouds of smoke rolled up like a smudge against the background of blue sky.

The ground under the trees in the wood was covered with small bits of white paper. I could not account for their presence until I examined several of them and found that these were letters from American mothers and wives

and sweethearts—letters—whole packages of them, which the tired, dog-weary Marines had been forced to remove from their packs and destroy in order to ease the straps that cut into aching grooves in their shoulders. Circumstances also forced the abandonment of much other material and equipment.

Occasional shells were dropping in the woods, which were also within range from a long distance, indirect machine gun fire from the enemy. Bits of lead, wobbling in their flight at the end of their long trajectory, sung through the air above our heads and clipped leaves and twigs from the branches. On the edge of the woods we came upon a hastily dug out pit in which there were two American machine guns and their crews.

The field in front of the woods sloped gently down some two hundred yards to another cluster of trees. This cluster was almost as big as the one we were in. Part of it was occupied by the Germans. Our machine gunners maintained a continual fire into that part held by the enemy.

Five minutes before five o'clock, the order for the advance reached our pit. It was brought there by a second lieutenant, a platoon commander.

"What are you doing here?" he asked, looking at the green brassard and red "C" on my left arm.

"Looking for the big story," I said.

"If I were you I'd be about forty miles south of this place," said the Lieutenant, "but if you want to see the fun, stick around. We are going forward in five minutes."

That was the last I saw of him until days later, when both of us, wounded, met in the hospital. Of course, the first thing he said was, "I told you so."

We hurriedly finished the contents of the can of cold

"Corned Willy" which one of the machine gunners and I were eating. The machine guns were taken down and the barrels, cradles and tripods were handed over to the members of the crew whose duties it was to carry them.

And then we went over. There are really no heroics about it. There is no bugle call, no sword waving, no dramatic enunciation of catchy commands, no theatricalism—it's just plain get up and go over. And it is done just the same as one would walk across a peaceful wheat field out in Iowa.

But with the appearance of our first line, as it stepped from the shelter of the woods into the open exposure of the flat field, the woods opposite began to cackle and rattle with the enemy machine gun fire. Our men advanced in open order, ten and twelve feet between men. Sometimes a squad would run forward fifty feet and drop. And as its members flattened on the ground for safety another squad would rise from the ground and make another rush.

They gained the woods. Then we could hear shouting. Then we knew that work was being done with the bayonet. The machine gun fire continued in intensity and then died down completely. The wood had been won. Our men consolidated the position by moving forward in groups ever on the watch-out for snipers in the trees. A number of these were brought down by our crack pistol shots.

At different times during the advance runners had come through the woods inquiring for Major John Berry, the battalion commander. One of these runners attached himself to Lieutenant Hartzell and myself and together the three of us located the Major coming through the woods. He granted permission for Lieutenant Hartzell

and me to accompany him and we started forward, in all a party of some fifteen, including ten runners attached to the battalion commander.

Owing to the continual evidences of German snipers in the trees, every one in our party carried a revolver ready in his hand, with the exception of myself. Correspondents, you will remember, are non-combatants and must be unarmed. I carried a notebook, but it was loaded. We made our way down the slope of the wooded hillside.

Midway down the slope, the hill was bisected by a sunken road which turned forward on the left. Lying in the road were a number of French bodies and several of our men who had been brought down but five minutes before. We crossed that road hurriedly knowing that it was covered from the left by German machine guns.

At the bottom of the slope there was a V-shaped field. The apex of the V was on the left. From left to right the field was some two hundred yards in width. The point where we came out of the woods was about one hundred yards from the apex. At that point the field was about one hundred yards across. It was perfectly flat and was covered with a young crop of oats between ten and fifteen inches high.

This V-shaped oat field was bordered on all sides by dense clusters of trees. In the trees on the side opposite the side on which we stood, were German machine guns. We could hear them. We could not see them but we knew that every leaf and piece of greenery there vibrated from their fire and the tops of the young oats waved and swayed with the streams of lead that swept across.

Major Berry gave orders for us to follow him at intervals of ten or fifteen yards. Then he started across the field alone at the head of the party. I followed. Be-

hind me came Hartzell. Then the woods about us began to rattle fiercely. It was unusually close range. That lead travelled so fast that we could not hear it as it passed. We soon had visual demonstration of the hot place we were in when we began to see the dust puffs that the bullets kicked up in the dirt around our feet.

Major Berry had advanced well beyond the centre of the field when I saw him turn toward me and heard him shout:

"Get down everybody."

We all fell on our faces. And then it began to come hot and fast. Perfectly withering volleys of lead swept the tops of the oats just over us. For some reason it did not seem to be coming from the trees hardly a hundred yards in front of us. It was coming from a new direction—from the left.

I was busily engaged flattening myself on the ground. Then I heard a shout in front of me. It came from Major Berry. I lifted my head cautiously and looked forward. The Major was making an effort to get to his feet. With his right hand he was savagely grasping his left wrist.

"My hand's gone," he shouted. One of the streams of lead from the left had found him. A ball had entered his left arm at the elbow, had travelled down the side of the bone, tearing away muscles and nerves of the forearm and lodging itself in the palm of his hand. His pain was excruciating.

"Get down. Flatten out, Major," I shouted, and he dropped to the ground. I did not know the extent of his injuries at that time but I did know that he was courting death every minute he stood up.

"We've got to get out of here," said the Major. "We've got to get forward. They'll start shelling this open field in a few minutes."

I lifted my head for another cautious look.

I judged that I was lying about thirty yards from the edge of the trees in front of us. The Major was about ten yards in front of me.

"You are twenty yards from the trees," I shouted to the Major. "I am crawling over to you now. Wait until I get there and I'll help you. Then we'll get up and make a dash for it."

"All right," replied the Major, "hurry along."

I started forward, keeping as flat on the ground as it was possible to do so and at the same time move. As far as was feasible, I pushed forward by digging in with my toes and elbows extended in front of me. It was my object to make as little movement in the oats as possible. I was not mistaken about the intensity of fire that swept the field. It was terrific.

And then it happened. The lighted end of a cigarette touched me in the fleshy part of my upper left arm. That was all. It just felt like a sudden burn and nothing worse. The burned part did not seem to be any larger in area than that part which could be burned by the lighted end of a cigarette.

At the time there was no feeling within the arm, that is, no feeling as to aches or pain. There was nothing to indicate that the bullet, as I learned several days later, had gone through the bicep muscle of the upper arm and had come out on the other side. The only sensation perceptible at the time was the burning touch at the spot where the bullet entered.

I glanced down at the sleeve of my uniformed coat and could not even see the hole where the bullet had entered. Neither was there any sudden flow of blood. At the time there was no stiffness or discomfort in the arm and I continued to use it to work my way forward.

Then the second one hit. It nicked the top of my left shoulder. And again came the burning sensation, only this time the area affected seemed larger. Hitting as it did in the meaty cap of the shoulder, I feared that there would be no further use for the arm until it had received attention, but again I was surprised when I found upon experiment that I could still use it. The bone seemed to be affected in no way.

Again there was no sudden flow of blood, nor stiffness. It seemed hard for me to believe at the time, but I had been shot twice, penetrated through by two bullets and was experiencing not any more pain than I had experienced once when I dropped a lighted cigarette on the back of my hand. I am certain that the pain in no way approached that sensation which the dentist provides when he drills into a tooth with a live nerve in it.

So I continued to move toward the Major. Occasionally I would shout something to him, although, at this time, I am unable to remember what it was. I only wanted to let him know I was coming. I had fears, based on the one look that I had obtained of his pain-distorted face, that he had been mortally shot in the body.

And then the third one struck me. In order to keep as close to the ground as possible, I had swung my chin to the right so that I was pushing forward with my left cheek flat against the ground and in order to accommodate this position of the head, I had moved my steel helmet over so that it covered part of my face on the right.

Then there came a crash. It sounded to me like some one had dropped a glass bottle into a porcelain bathtub. A barrel of whitewash tipped over and it seemed that everything in the world turned white. That was the sensation. I did not recognise it because I have often been

led to believe and often heard it said that when one receives a blow on the head everything turns black.

Maybe I am contrarily constructed, but in my case everything became pure white. I remember this distinctly because my years of newspaper training had been in but one direction—to sense and remember. So it was that, even without knowing it, my mind was making mental notes on every impression that my senses registered.

I did not know yet where I had been hit or what the bullet had done. I knew that I was still knowing things. I did not know whether I was alive or dead but I did know that my mind was still working. I was still mentally taking notes on every second.

The first recess in that note-taking came when I asked myself the following question:

"Am I dead?"

I didn't laugh or didn't even smile when I asked myself the question without putting it in words. I wanted to know. And wanting to know, I undertook to find out. I am not aware now that there was any appreciable passage of time during this mental progress. I feel certain, however, that I never lost consciousness.

How was I to find out if I was dead? The shock had lifted my head off the ground but I had immediately replaced it as close to the soil as possible. My twice punctured left arm was lying alongside my body. I decided to try and move my fingers on my left hand. I did so and they moved. I next moved my left foot. Then I knew I was alive.

Then I brought my right hand up toward my face and placed it to the left of my nose. My fingers rested on something soft and wet. I withdrew the hand and looked at it. It was covered with blood. As I looked

HELMET WORN BY FLOYD GIBBONS WHEN WOUNDED, SHOWING DAMAGE CAUSED BY SHRAPNEL

at it, I was not aware that my entire vision was confined to my right eye, although there was considerable pain in the entire left side of my face.

This was sufficient to send me on another mental investigation. I closed my right eye and—all was dark. My first thought following this experiment was that my left eye was closed. So I again counselled with myself and tried to open my left eye—that is, tried to give the mental command that would cause the muscles of the left eye to open the lid and close it again.

I did this but could not feel or verify in any way whether the eye lid responded or not. I only knew that it remained dark on that side. This brought me to another conclusion and not a pessimistic one at that. I simply believed, in spite of the pain, that something had struck me in the eye and had closed it.

I did not know then, as I know now, that a bullet striking the ground immediately under my left cheek bone, had ricochetted upward, going completely through the left eye and then crashing out through my forehead, leaving the eyeball and upper eyelid completely halved, the lower eyelid torn away, and a compound fracture of the skull.

Further progress toward the Major was impossible. I must confess that I became so intensely interested in the weird sensations and subjective research, that I even neglected to call out and tell the wounded officer that I would not be able to continue to his assistance. I held this view in spite of the fact that my original intentions were strong. Lying there with my left cheek flat on the ground, I was able to observe some minutes later the wounded Major rise to his feet and in a perfect hail of lead rush forward and out of my line of vision.

It was several days later, in the hospital, that I learned

that he reached the shelter of the woods beyond without being hit again, and in that place, although suffering intense pain, was able to shout back orders which resulted in the subsequent wiping out of the machine gun nest that had been our undoing. For this supreme effort, General Pershing decorated him with the Distinguished Service Cross.

I began to make plans to get out of the exposed position in which I was lying. Whereas the field when I started across it had seemed perfectly flat, now it impressed me as being convex and I was further impressed with the belief that I was lying on the very uppermost and most exposed curvature of it. There is no doubt that the continued stream of machine gun lead that swept the field superinduced this belief. I got as close to the ground as a piece of paper on top of a table. I remember regretting sincerely that the war had reached the stage of open movement and one consequence of which was that there wasn't a shell hole anywhere to crawl into.

This did not, however, eliminate the dangerous possibility of shelling. With the fatalism that one acquires along the fronts, I was ready to take my chances with the casual German shell that one might have expected, but I devoted much thought to a consideration of the French and American artillery some miles behind me. I considered the possibility of word having been sent back that our advancing waves at this point had been cut down by enemy machine gunners who were still in position preventing all progress at this place. I knew that such information, if sent back, would immediately be forwarded to our guns and then a devastating concentration of shells would be directed toward the location of the machine gun nests.

I knew that I was lying one hundred yards from one

of those nests and I knew that I was well within the fatal bursting radius of any shells our gunners might direct against that German target. My fear was that myself and other American wounded lying in that field would die by American guns. That is what would have happened if that information had reached our artillery and it is what should have happened.

The lives of the wounded in that field were as nothing compared with the importance of wiping out that machine gun nest on our left which was holding up the entire advance.

I wanted to see what time it was and my watch was attached to my left wrist. In endeavouring to get a look at it, I found out that my left arm was stiff and racked with pain. Hartzell, I knew, had a watch, but I did not know where he was lying, so I called out.

He answered me from some distance away but I could not tell how far or in what direction. I could see dimly but only at the expense of great pain. When he answered I shouted back to him:

"Are you hit?"

"No, are you?" he asked.

"Yes, what time is it?" I said.

"Are you hit badly?" he asked in reply.

"No, I don't think so," I said. "I think I'm all right."

"Where are you hit?" he asked.

"In the head," I said; "I think something hit my eye."

"In the head, you damn fool," he shouted louder with just a bit of anger and surprise in his voice. "How the hell can you be all right if you are hit in the head? Are you bleeding much?"

"No," I said. "What time is it, will you tell me?"

"I'm coming over to get you," shouted Hartzell.

"Don't move, you damn fool, you want to kill both

of us?" I hastened to shout back. "If you start moving, don't move near me. I think they think I'm dead."

"Well you can't lie there and bleed to death," Hartzell replied. "We've got to do something to get to hell out of here. What'll we do?"

"Tell me what time it is and how long it will be before it's dark," I asked.

"It's six o'clock now," Hartzell said, "and it won't be dark 'til nine; this is June. Do you think you can stick it out?"

I told him that I thought I could and we were silent for some time. Both of us had the feeling that other ears —ears working in conjunction with eyes trained along the barrels of those machine guns a hundred yards on our left—would be aroused to better marksmanship if we continued to talk.

I began to take stock of my condition. During my year or more along the fronts I had been through many hospitals and from my observations in those institutions I had cultivated a keen distaste for one thing—gas gangrene. I had learned from doctors its fatal and horrible results and I also had learned from them that it was caused by germs which exist in large quantities in any ground that has been under artificial cultivation for a long period.

Such was the character of the very field I was lying in and I came to the realisation that the wound in the left side of my face and head was resting flatly on the soil. With my right hand I drew up my British box respirator or gas mask and placed this under my head. Thus I rested with more confidence, although the machine gun lead continued to pass in sheets through the tops of the oats not two or three inches above my head.

All of it was coming from the left,—coming from the

German nests located in the trees at the apex of the V-shaped field. Those guns were not a hundred yards away and they seemed to have an inexhaustible supply of ammunition. Twenty feet away on my left a wounded Marine was lying. Occasionally I would open my right eye for a painful look in his direction.

He was wounded and apparently unconscious. His pack, "the khaki doll," was still strapped between his shoulders. Unconsciously he was doing that which all wounded men do—that is, to assume the position that is the most comfortable. He was trying to roll over on his back.

But the pack was on his back and every time he would roll over on this it would elevate his body into full view of the German gunners. Then a withering hail of lead would sweep the field. It so happened that I was lying immediately in line between those German guns and this unconscious moving target. As the Marine would roll over on top of the pack his chest would be exposed to the fire.

I could see the buttons fly from his tunic and one of the shoulder straps of the back pack part as the sprays of lead struck him. He would limply roll off the pack over on his side. I found myself wishing that he would lie still, as every movement of his brought those streams of bullets closer and closer to my head. I even considered the thickness of the box respirator on which I had elevated my head off the ground. It was about two inches thick.

I remembered my French gas mask hanging from my shoulder and recalled immediately that it was much flatter, being hardly half an inch in thickness. I forthwith drew up the French mask to my head, extracted the British one and rested my cheek closer to the ground on the French one. Thus, I lowered my head about an inch and

a half—an inch and a half that represented worlds of satisfaction and some optimism to me.

Sometimes there were lulls in the firing. During those periods of comparative quiet, I could hear the occasional moan of other wounded on that field. Very few of them cried out and it seemed to me that those who did were unconscious when they did it. One man in particular had a long, low groan. I could not see him, yet I felt he was lying somewhere close to me. In the quiet intervals, his unconscious expression of pain reminded me of the sound I had once heard made by a calf which had been tied by a short rope to a tree. The animal had strayed round and round the tree until its entanglements in the rope had left it a helpless prisoner. The groan of that unseen, unconscious wounded American who laid near me on the field that evening sounded exactly like the pitiful bawl of that calf.

Those three hours were long in passing. With the successive volleys that swept the field, I sometimes lost hope that I could ever survive it. It seemed to me that if three German bullets had found me within the space of fifteen minutes, I could hardly expect to spend three hours without receiving the fatal one. With such thoughts on my mind I reopened conversation with Hartzell.

"How's it coming, old man?" I shouted.

"They're coming damn close," he said; "how is it with you? Are you losing much blood?"

"No, I'm all right as far as that goes," I replied, "but I want you to communicate with my wife, if its 'west' for me."

"What's her address?" said Hartzell.

"It's a long one," I said. "Are you ready to take it?"

"Shoot," said Hartzell.

" 'Mrs. Floyd Gibbons, No. 12 Bis, Rue de la Chevalier de la Barre, Dijon, Côte d'Or, France.' " I said slowly.

"My God," said Hartzell, "say it again."

Back and forth we repeated the address correctly and incorrectly some ten or twelve times until Hartzell informed me that he knew it well enough to sing it. He also gave me his wife's address. Then just to make conversation he would shout over, every fifteen minutes, and tell me that there was just that much less time that we would have to lie there.

I thought that hour between seven and eight o'clock dragged the most, but the one between eight and nine seemed interminable. The hours were so long, particularly when we considered that a German machine gun could fire three hundred shots a minute. Dusk approached slowly. And finally Hartzell called over:

"I don't think they can see us now," he said; "let's start to crawl back."

"Which way shall we crawl?" I asked.

"Into the woods," said Hartzell.

"Which woods?" I asked.

"The woods we came out of, you damn fool," he replied.

"Which direction are they in?" I said, "I've been moving around and I don't know which way I am heading. Are you on my left, or on my right?"

"I can't tell whether I'm on your left or your right," he replied. "How are you lying, on your face or on your back?"

"On my face," I said, "and your voice sounds like it comes from in back of me and on the left."

"If that's the case," said Hartzell, "your head is lying toward the wrong woods. Work around in a half circle and you'll be facing the right direction."

I did so and then heard Hartzell's voice on my right. I started moving toward him. Against my better judgment and expressed wishes, he crawled out toward me and met me half way. His voice close in front of me surprised me.

"Hold your head up a little," he said, "I want to see where it hit you."

"I don't think it looks very nice," I replied, lifting my head. I wanted to know how it looked myself, so I painfully opened the right eye and looked through the oats eighteen inches into Hartzell's face. I saw the look of horror on it as he looked into mine.

Twenty minutes later, after crawling painfully through the interminable yards of young oats, we reached the edge of the woods and safety.

That's how it feels to be shot.

CHAPTER XVII

"GOOD MORNING, NURSE"

WEAKNESS from the loss of blood began to grow on me as Lieutenant Hartzell and I made our way through the deepening shadows of the wooded hillside in the rear of the field on which I had been shot. In an upright position of walking the pains in my head seemed to increase. We stopped for a minute and, neither of us having first aid kits with us, I resurrected a somewhat soiled silk handkerchief with which Hartzell bound up my head in a manner that applied supporting pressure over my left eye and brought a degree of relief.

Hartzell told me later that I was staggering slightly when we reached a small relief dugout about a mile back of the wood. There a medical corps man removed the handkerchief and bound my head with a white gauze bandage. I was anxious to have the wound cleaned but he told me there was no water. He said they had been forced to turn it over to the men to drink. This seemed to me to be as it should be because my thirst was terrific, yet there was no water left.

We stumbled rearward another half mile and, in the darkness, came upon the edge of another wooded area. A considerable number of our wounded were lying on stretchers on the ground. The Germans were keeping up a continual fire of shrapnel and high explosive shell in the woods, apparently to prevent the mobilisation of reserves, but the doctors, taking care of the wounded, proceeded with their work without notice to the whine of the shells passing overhead or the bursting of those

that landed nearby. They went at their work just as though they were caring for injured men on a football field.

Hartzell stretched me out on the ground and soon had a doctor bending over me. The doctor removed the eye bandage, took one look at what was beneath it and then replaced it. I remember this distinctly because at the time I made the mental note that the doctor apparently considered my head wound beyond anything he could repair. He next turned his attention to my arm and shoulder. He inserted his scissors into my left sleeve at the wrist and ripped it up to the shoulder. He followed this operation by cutting through my heavy khaki tunic from the shoulder to the collar. A few more snips of the nickel-plated blades and my shirt and undershirt were cut away. He located the three bullet holes, two in the arm and one across the top of the shoulder, and bound them up with bandages.

"We're awful shy on ambulances," he said; "you will have to lie here a while."

"I feel that I can walk all right if there is no reason why I shouldn't," I replied.

"You ought to be in an ambulance," said the doctor, "but if you feel that you can make it, you might take a try at it."

Then turning to Lieutenant Hartzell, he said, "Keep right with him, and if he begins to get groggy, make him lie down."

So Hartzell and I resumed our rearward plodding or staggering. He walked at my right side and slightly in front of me, holding my right arm over his right shoulder and thereby giving me considerable support. We had not proceeded far before we heard the racing motor of an automobile coming from behind us. An

occasional shell was dropping along the road we were now on.

A stick struck my legs from behind in the darkness. And then an apologetic voice said:

"Beg your pardon, sir, just feeling along the road for shell holes. Ambulance right behind me, sir. Would you mind stepping to one side? Come on, Bill," to the driver of the ambulance, "it looks all clear through here."

The automobile with the racing motor turned out to be a light ambulance of a popular Detroit make. Its speeding engine was pure camouflage for its slow progress. It bubbled and steamed at the radiator cap as it pushed along at almost a snail's pace.

"All full?" Hartzell shouted into the darkness of the driver's seat.

"To the brim," responded the driver. "Are you wounded?"

"No, but I have a wounded man with me," said Hartzell. "He can sit beside you on the seat if you have room."

"Get right in," said the driver, and Hartzell boosted me into the front seat. We pushed along slowly, Hartzell walking beside the car and the driver's assistant proceeding ahead of us, searching the dark road with his cane for new shell craters.

Occasionally, when our wheels would strike in one of these, groans would come from the ambulance proper.

"Take it easy," would come a voice through pain-pressed lips; "for Christ's sake, do you think you are driving a truck?"

I heard the driver tell Hartzell that he had three men with bullet splintered legs in the ambulance. Every jolt of the car caused their broken bones to jolt and increased the pounding of their wearied nerves to an extremity of

agony. The fourth occupant of the ambulance, he said, had been shot through the lungs.

Some distance along, there came a knock on the wooden partition behind my back,—the partition that separates the driver's seat from the ambulance proper. The car stopped and the driver and Hartzell went to the rear door and opened it. The man with the shot through the lungs was half sitting up on his stretcher. He had one hand to his mouth and his lips, as revealed in the rays of the driver's flashlight, were red wet.

"Quick—get me—to a doctor," the man said between gulps and gurgles.

The driver considered. He knew we were ten miles from the closest doctor. Then he addressed himself to the other three stretcher-cases—the men with the torture-torn legs.

"If I go fast, you guys are going to suffer the agonies of hell," he said, "and if I go slow this guy with the hemorrhage will croak before we get there. How do you want me to drive?"

There was not a minute's silence. The three broken leg cases responded almost in unison.

"Go as fast as you can," they said.

And we did. With Hartzell riding the running board beside me and the crater finder clinging to the mud guards on the other side, we sped through the darkness regardless of the ruts and shell holes. The jolting was severe but never once did there come another complaint from the occupants of the ambulance.

In this manner did we arrive in time at the first medical clearing station. I learned later that the life of the man with the hemorrhage was saved and he is alive to-day.

The clearing station was located in an old church on the outskirts of a little village. Four times during this war the flow and ebb of battle had passed about this old edifice. Hartzell half carried me off the ambulance seat and into the church. As I felt my feet scrape on the flagstoned flooring underneath the Gothic entrance arch, I opened my right eye for a painful survey of the interior.

The walls, grey with age, appeared yellow in the light of the candles and lanterns that were used for illumination. Blankets, and bits of canvas and carpet had been tacked over the apertures where once stained glass windows and huge oaken doors had been. These precautions were necessary to prevent the lights from shining outside the building and betraying our location to the hospital-loving eyes of German bombing 'planes whose motors we could hear even at that minute, humming in the black sky above us.

Our American wounded were lying on stretchers all over the floor. Near the door, where I entered, a number of pews had been pushed to one side and on these our walking wounded were seated. They were smoking cigarettes and talking and passing observations on every fresh case that came through the door. They all seemed to be looking at me.

My appearance must have been sufficient to have shocked them. I was hatless and my hair was matted with blood. The red-stained bandage around my forehead and extending down over my left cheek did not hide the rest of my face, which was unwashed, and consequently red with fresh blood.

On my left side I was completely bare from the shoulder to the waist with the exception of the strips of white-cloth about my arm and shoulder. My chest was splashed with red from the two body wounds. Such was my en-

trance. I must have looked somewhat grewsome because I happened to catch an involuntary shudder as it passed over the face of one of my observers among the walking wounded and I heard him remark to the man next to him:

"My God, look what they're bringing in."

Hartzell placed me on a stretcher on the floor and went for water, which I sorely needed. I heard some one stop beside my stretcher and bend over me, while a kindly voice said:

"Would you like a cigarette, old man?"

"Yes," I replied. He lighted one in his own lips and placed it in my mouth. I wanted to know my benefactor. I asked him for his name and organisation.

"I am not a soldier," he said; "I am a non-combatant, the same as you. My name is Slater and I'm from the Y. M. C. A."

That cigarette tasted mighty good. If you who read this are one of those whose contributions to the Y. M. C. A. made that distribution possible, I wish to herewith express to you my gratefulness and the gratefulness of the other men who enjoyed your generosity that night.

In front of what had been the altar in the church, there had been erected a rudely constructed operation table. The table was surrounded with tall candelabrum of brass and gilded wood. These ornate accessories had been removed from the altar for the purpose of providing better light for the surgeons who busied themselves about the table in their long gowns of white—stained with red.

I was placed on that table for an examination and I heard a peculiar conversation going on about me. One doctor said, "We haven't any more of it." Then an-

other doctor said, "But I thought we had plenty." The first voice replied, "Yes, but we didn't expect so many wounded. We have used up all we had." Then the second voice said, "Well, we certainly need it now. I don't know what we're going to do without it."

From their further conversation I learned that the subject under discussion was anti-tetanus serum—the all-important inoculation that prevents lockjaw and is also an antidote for the germs of gas gangrene. You may be sure I became more than mildly interested in the absence of this valuable boon, but there was nothing I could say that would help the case, so I remained quiet. In several minutes my composure was rewarded. I heard hurried footsteps across the flagstoned flooring and a minute later felt a steel needle penetrating my abdomen. Then a cheery voice said:

"It's all right, now, we've got plenty of it. We've got just piles of it. The Red Cross just shot it out from Paris in limousines."

After the injection Hartzell informed me that the doctors could do nothing for me at that place and that I was to be moved further to the rear. He said ambulances were scarce but he had found a place for me in a returning ammunition truck. I was carried out of the church and somewhere in the outer darkness was lifted up into the body of the truck and laid down on some straw in the bottom. There were some fifteen or twenty other men lying there beside me.

The jolting in this springless vehicle was severe, but its severity was relieved in some of our cases by the quieting injections we had received. The effects of these narcotics had worn off in some of the men and they suffered the worse for it. One of them continually called out

to the truck driver to go slower and make less jolting. To each request the driver responded that he was going as slow as he could. As the jolting continued the man with the complaining nerves finally yelled out a new request. He said:

"Well, if you can't make it easier by going slow, then for God's sake throw her into high and go as fast as you can. Let's get it over as quick as we can."

Lying on my back in the truck with a raincoat as a pillow, I began to wonder where we were bound for. I opened my eye once and looked up toward the roof of the leafy tunnel which covered the road. Soon we passed out from beneath the trees bordering the roadside and I could see the sky above. The moon was out and there were lots of stars. They gave one something to think about. After all, how insignificant was one little life.

In this mood, something in the jolting of the camion brought to my mind the metre and words of George Amicks' wistful verses, "The Camion Caravan," and I repeat it from memory:

"Winding down through sleeping town
Pale stars of early dawn;
Like ancient knight with squire by side,
Driver and helper now we ride—
The camion caravan.

"In between the rows of trees
Glare of the mid-day sun;
Creeping along the highway wide,
Slowly in long defile, we ride—
The camion caravan.

"Homeward to *remorque* and rest,
Pale stars of early night;
Through stillness of the eventide,
Back through the winding town we ride—
The camion caravan."

Sometime during the dark hours of the early morning we stopped in the courtyard of a hospital and I was taken into another examination room illuminated with painfully brilliant lights. I was placed on a table for an examination, which seemed rather hurried, and then the table was rolled away some distance down a corridor. I never understood that move until some weeks later when a Lieutenant medical officer told me that it was he who had examined me at that place.

"You're looking pretty fit, now," he said, "but that night when I saw you I ticketed you for the dead pile. You didn't look like you could live till morning."

His statement gave me some satisfaction. There is always joy in fooling the doctor.

Hartzell, who still accompanied me, apparently rescued me from the "dead pile" and we started on another motor trip, this time on a stretcher in a large, easier-riding ambulance. In this I arrived shortly after dawn at the United States Military Base Hospital at Neuilly-sur-Seine, on the outskirts of Paris.

There were more hurried examinations and soon I was rolled down a corridor on a wheeled table, into an elevator that started upward. Then the wheeled table raced down another long corridor and I began to feel that my journeyings were endless. We stopped finally in a room where I distinctly caught the odour of ether. Some one began removing my boots and clothes. As that some one worked he talked to me.

"I know you, Mr. Gibbons," he said. "I'm from Chicago also. I am Sergeant Stephen Hayes. I used to go to Hyde Park High School. We're going to fix you up right away."

I learned from Hayes that I was lying in a room adjoining the operating chamber and was being prepared for the operating table. Some information concerning the extent of my injuries and the purpose of the operation would have been comforting and would have relieved the sensation of utter helpless childishness that I was experiencing.

I knew I was about to go under the influence of the anesthetic and that something was going to be done to me. I had every confidence that whatever was done would be for the best but it was perfectly natural that I should be curious about it. Was the operation to be a serious one or a minor one? Would they have to remove my eye? Would they have to operate on my skull? How about the arm? Would there be an amputation? How about the other eye? Would I ever see again? It must be remembered that in spite of all the examinations I had not been informed and consequently had no knowledge concerning the extent of my injuries. The only information I had received had been included in vague remarks intended as soothing, such as "You're all right, old man." "You'll pull through fine." "You're coming along nicely." But all of it had seemed too professionally optimistic to satisfy me and my doubts still remained.

They were relieved, however, by the pressure of a hand and the sound of a voice. In the words spoken and in the pressure of the hand, there was hardly anything different from similar hand pressures and similar spoken phrases that had come to me during the night, yet there

was everything different. This voice and this hand carried supreme confidence. I could believe in both of them. I felt the hand pressure on my right shoulder and the mild kindly voice said:

"Son, I am going to operate on you. I have examined you and you are all right. You are going to come through fine. Don't worry about anything."

"Thank you, very much," I said, "I like your voice. It sounds like my father's. Will you tell me your name?"

"I am Major Powers," the kindly voice said. "Now just take it easy, and I will talk to you again in a couple of hours when you feel better."

The speaker, as I learned later, was Major Charles Powers, of Denver, Colorado, one of the best-known and best-loved surgeons in the West. A man far advanced in his profession and well advanced in his years, a man whose life has not been one of continual health, a man who, upon America's entry of the war, sacrificed the safety of the beneficial air rarity of his native Denver to answer the country's call, to go to France at great personal risk to his health—a risk only appreciated by those who know him well. It was Major Powers who operated upon the compound fracture in my skull that morning.

My mental note-taking continued as the anesthetist worked over me with the ether. As I began breathing the fumes I remember that my senses were keenly making observations on every sensation I experienced. The thought even went through my mind that it would be rather an unusual thing to report completely the impressions of coma. This suggestion became a determination and I became keyed up to everything going on about me.

The conversation of the young doctor who was ad-

ministering the anesthetic interested me unusually. He was very busy and business-like and although I considered myself an important and most interested party in the entire proceedings, his conversation ignored me entirely. He not only did not talk to me, but he was not even talking about me. As he continued to apply the ether, he kept up a running fire of entirely extraneous remarks with some other person near the table. I did not appreciate then, as I do now, that I was only one of very, very many that he had anesthetised that morning and the night before, but at the time his seeming lack of all interest in me as me, piqued me considerably.

"Are you feeling my pulse?" I said. I could not feel his hand on either of my wrists, but I asked the question principally to inject myself into the conversation in some way or other, preferably in some way that would call him to account, as I had by this time aroused within me a keen and healthy dislike for this busy little worker whom I could not see but who stood over me and carried on conversations with other people to my utter and complete exclusion. And all the time he was engaged in feeding me the fumes that I knew would soon steal away my senses.

"Now, never you mind about your pulse," he replied somewhat peevishly. "I'm taking care of this." It seemed to me from the tone of his voice that he implied I was talking about something that was none of my business and I had the distinct conviction that if the proceedings were anybody's business, they certainly were mine.

"You will pardon me for manifesting a mild interest in what you are doing to me," I said, "but you see I know that something is going to be done to my right

eye and inasmuch as that is the only eye I've got on that side, I can't help being concerned."

"Now, you just forget it and take deep breaths, and say, Charlie, did you see that case over in Ward 62? That was a wonderful case. The bullet hit the man in the head and they took the lead out of his stomach. He's got the bullet on the table beside him now. Talk about bullet eaters—believe me, those Marines sure are."

I hurled myself back into the conversation.

"I'll take deep breaths if you'll loosen the straps over my chest," I said, getting madder each minute. "How can I take a full breath when you've got my lungs strapped down?"

"Well, how's that?" responded the conversational anesthetist, as he loosened one of the straps. "Now, take one breath of fresh air—one deep, long breath, now."

I turned my head to one side to escape the fumes from the stifling towel over my face and made a frenzied gulp for fresh air. As I did so, one large drop of ether fell on the table right in front of my nose and the deep long breath I got had very little air in it. I felt I had been tricked.

"You're pretty cute, old timer, aren't you?" I remarked to the anesthetist for the purpose of letting him know that I was on to his game, but either he didn't hear me, or he was too interested in telling Charlie about his hopes and ambitions to be sent to the front with a medical unit that worked under range of the guns. He returned to a consideration of me with the following remark:

"All right, he's under now; where's the next one?"

"The hell I am," I responded hastily, as visions of knives and saws and gimlets and brain chisels went

through my mind. I had no intention or desire of being conscious when the carpenters and plumbers started to work on me.

I was completely ignored and the table started moving. We rolled across the floor and there commenced a clicking under the back of my head, not unlike the sound made when the barber lowers or elevates the head-rest on his chair. The table rolled seemingly a long distance down a long corridor and then came to the top of a slanting runway.

As I started riding the table down the runway I began to see that I was descending an inclined tube which seemed to be filled with yellow vapour. Some distance down, the table slowed up and we came to a stop in front of a circular bulkhead in the tunnel.

There was a door in the centre of the bulkhead and in the centre of the door there was a small wicket window which opened and two grotesquely smiling eyes peered out at me. Those eyes inspected me from head to foot and then, apparently satisfied, they twinkled and the wicket closed with a snap. Then the door opened and out stepped a quaint and curious figure with gnarled limbs and arms and a peculiar misshapen head, completely covered with a short growth of black hair.

I laughed outright, laughed hilariously. I recognised the man. The last time I had seen him was when he stepped out of a gas tank on the 18th floor of an office building in Chicago where I was reclining at the time in a dentist chair. He was the little gas demon who walked with me through the Elysian fields the last time I had a tooth pulled.

"Well you poor little son-of-a-gun," I said, by way of greeting. "What are you doing way over here in

France? I haven't seen you for almost two years, since that day back in Chicago."

The gas demon rolled his head from one side to the other and smiled, but I can't remember what he said. My mental note-taking concluded about there because the next memory I have is of complete darkness, and lying on my back in a cramped position while a horse trampled on my left arm.

"Back off of there," I shouted, but the animal's hoofs didn't move. The only effect my shouting had was to bring a soft hand into my right one, and a sweet voice close beside me.

"You're all right, now," said the sweet voice, "just try to take a little nap and you'll feel better."

Then I knew it was all over, that is, the operation was over, or something was over. Anyhow my mind was working and I was in a position where I wanted to know things again. I recall now, with a smile, that the first things that passed through my mind were the threadbare bromides so often quoted "Where am I?" I recall feeling the urge to say something at least original, so I enquired:

"What place is this, and will you please tell me what day and time it is?"

"This is the Military Base Hospital at Neuilly-sur-Seine just on the outskirts of Paris, and it is about eleven o'clock in the morning and to-day is Friday, June the seventh."

Then I went back to sleep with an etherised taste in my mouth like a motorman's glove.

CHAPTER XVIII

GROANS, LAUGHS AND SOBS IN THE HOSPITAL

THERE were fourteen wounded American soldiers in my ward—all men from the ranks and representing almost as many nationalistic extractions. There was an Irishman, a Swede, an Italian, a Jew, a Pole, one man of German parentage, and one man of Russian extraction. All of them had been wounded at the front and all of them now had something nearer and dearer to them than any traditions that might have been handed down to them from a mother country—they had fought and bled and suffered for a new country, *their* new country.

Here in this ward was the new melting pot of America. Not the melting pot of our great American cities where nationalistic quarters still exist, but a greater fusion process from which these men had emerged with unquestionable Americanism. They are the real and the new Americans—born in the hell of battle.

One night as we lay there, we heard an automobile racing through a street in this sleepy, warm little *faubourg* of Paris. The motor was sounding on its siren a call that was familiar to all of us. It was the alarm of a night attack from the air. It meant that German planes had crossed the front line and were on their way with death and destruction for Paris.

A nurse entered the room and drew the curtains of the tall windows to keep from our eyes the flash and the glitter of the shells that soon began to burst in the sky above us as the aerial defences located on the outer circle of the city began to erect a wall of bursting steel around

the French capital. We could hear the guns barking close by and occasionally the louder boom that told us one of the German bombs had landed. Particles of shrapnel began falling in the garden beneath the windows of our ward and we could hear the rattle of the pieces on the slate roof of a pavilion there. It is most unpleasant, it goes without saying, to lie helpless on one's back and grapple with the realisation that directly over your head—right straight above your eyes and face—is an enemy airplane loaded with bombs. Many of us knew that those bombs contained, some of them, more than two hundred pounds of melilite and some of us had witnessed the terrific havoc they wrought when they landed on a building. All of us knew, as the world knows, the particular attraction that hospitals have for German bombs.

The aerial bombardment subsided after some ten or fifteen minutes and soon we heard the motor racing back through the streets while a musician in the car sounded on a bugle the "prologue" or the signal that the raid was over. The invaders had been driven back. All of us in the ward tried to sleep. But nerves tingled from this more or less uncomfortable experience and wounds ached and burned. Sleep was almost out of the question, and in the darkened ward I soon noticed the red glow of cigarette after cigarette from bed to bed as the men sought to woo relief with tobacco smoke.

We began to discuss a subject very near and very dear to all wounded men. That is, what they are going to do as soon as they get out of the hospital. It is known, of course, that the first consideration usually is, to return to the front, but in many instances in our ward, this was entirely out of the question.

So it was with Dan Bailey who occupied a bed two

beds on my right. His left leg was off above the knee. He lost it going over the top at Cantigny.

"I know what I'm going to do when I get home," he said, "I am going to get a job as an instructor in a roller skating rink."

In a bed on the other side of the ward was a young man with his right arm off. His name was Johnson and he had been a musician. In time of battle, musicians lay aside their trombones and cornets and go over the top with the men, only they carry stretchers instead of rifles. Johnson had done this. Something had exploded quite close to him and his entire recollection of the battle was that he had awakened being carried back on his own stretcher.

"I know where I can sure get work," he said, glancing down at the stump of his lost arm. "I am going to sign up as a pitcher with the St. Louis Nationals."

Days later when I looked on Johnson for the first time, I asked him if he wasn't Irish, and he said no. Then I asked him where he lost his arm and he replied, "At the yoint." And then I knew where he came from.

But concerning after-the-war occupations, I endeavoured that night to contribute something in a similar vein to the general discussion, and I suggested the possibility that I might return to give lessons on the monocle.

The prize prospect, however, was submitted by a man who occupied a bed far over in one corner of the room. He was the possessor of a polysyllabic name—a name sprinkled with k's, s's and z's, with a scarcity of vowels —a name that we could not pronounce, much less remember. On account of his size we called him "Big Boy." His was a peculiar story.

He had been captured by three Germans who were marching him back to their line. In telling me the story

Big Boy said, "Mr. Gibbons, I made up my mind as I walked back with them that I might just as well be dead as to spend the rest of the war studying German."

So he had struck the man on the right and the one on the left and had downed both of them, but the German in back of him, got him with the bayonet. A nerve centre in his back was severed by the slash of the steel that extended almost from one shoulder to the other, and Big Boy had fallen to the ground, his arms and legs powerless. Then the German with the bayonet robbed him. Big Boy enumerated the loss to me,—fifty-three dollars and his girl's picture.

Although paralysed and helpless, there was nothing down in the mouth about Big Boy—indeed, he provided most of the fun in the ward. He had an idea all of his own about what he was going to do after the war and he let us know about it that night.

"All of you guys have told what you're going to do," he said, "now I'm going to tell you the truth. I'm going back to that little town of mine in Ohio and go down to the grocery store and sit there on a soap box on the porch.

"Then I'm going to gather all the little boys in the neighbourhood round about me and then I'm going to outlie the G. A. R."

There was one thing in that ward that nobody could lie about and that was the twitches of pain we suffered in the mornings when the old dressings of the day before were changed and new ones applied.

The doctor and his woman assistant who had charge of the surgical dressings on that corridor would arrive in the ward shortly after breakfast. They would be wheeling in front of them a rubber-tired, white-enamelled vehicle on which were piled the jars of antiseptic gauze

and trays of nickel-plated instruments, which both the doctor and his assistant would handle with rubber-gloved hands. In our ward that vehicle was known as the "Agony Cart," and every time it stopped at the foot of a bed you would be pretty sure to hear a groan or a stifled wail in a few minutes.

We had various ways of expressing or suppressing the pain. You who have had a particularly vicious mustard plaster jerked off that tender spot in the back, right between the shoulders, have some small conception of the delicate sensation that accompanies the removal of old gauze from a healing wound.

Some of the men would grit their teeth and grunt, others would put their wrists in their mouths and bite themselves during the operation. Some others would try to keep talking to the doctor or the nurse while the ordeal was in progress and others would just simply shout. There was little satisfaction to be gained from these expressions of pain because while one man was yelling the other thirteen in the ward were shouting with glee and chaffing him, and as soon as his wounds had been redressed he would join in the laughs at the expense of those who followed him.

There was a Jewish boy in the ward and he had a particularly painful shell wound in his right leg. He was plucky about the painful treatment and used to say to the doctor, "Don't mind me yelling, doc. I can't help it, but you just keep right on."

The Jew boy's cry of pain as near as I can reproduce it went something like this, "Oy! Oy!! Oy!!! YOY!!! Doctor!"

The Jew boy's clear-toned enunciation of this Yiddish lullaby, as the rest of the ward called it, brought many a heartless, fiendish laugh from the occupants of the

other beds. We almost lost one of our patients on account of that laugh. He nearly laughed himself to death—in fact.

This near victim of uncontrollable risibilities was an Italian boy from the East Side of New York. A piece of shrapnel had penetrated one of his lungs and pleurisy had developed in the other one. It had become necessary to operate on one of the lungs and tape it down. The boy had to do his best to breathe with one lung that was affected by pleurisy. Every breath was like the stab of a knife and it was quite natural that the patient would be peevish and garrulous. The whole ward called him the "dying Wop." But his name was Frank.

When the Jew boy would run the scale with his torture cry, the "dying Wop" would be forced to forget his laboured breathing and give vent to laughter. These almost fatal laughs sounded something like this:

"He! Hee!! Hee!!! (on a rising inflection and then much softer) Oh, Oh, Oh! Stop him, stop him, stop him!" The "He-Hee's" were laughs, but the "Oh-oh's" were excruciating pain.

Frank grew steadily worse and had to be removed from the ward. Weeks afterward I went back to see him and found him much thinner and considerably weaker. He occupied a bed on one of the pavilions in the garden. He was still breathing out of that one lung and between gasps he told me that six men had died in the bed next to him. Then he smiled up at me with a look in his eyes that seemed to say, "But they haven't croaked the 'dying Wop' yet."

"This here—hospital stuff——" Frank told me slowly, and between gasps, "is the big fight after all. I know—I am fighting here—against death—and am going to win out, too.

"I'm going to win out even though it is harder to fight—than fighting—the Germans—up front. We Italians licked Hell out of them—a million years ago. Old General Cæsar did it and he used to bring them back to Rome and put 'em in white-wing suits on the streets."

For all his quaint knowledge of Cæsar's successes against the progenitors of Kulturland of to-day, Frank was all American. Here was a rough-cut young American from the streets of New York's Little Italy. Here was a man who had almost made the supreme sacrifice. Here was a man who, if he did escape death, faced long weakened years ahead. It occurred to me that I would like to know, that it would be interesting to know, in what opinion this wounded American soldier, the son of uneducated immigrant parents, would hold the Chief Executive of the United States, the man he would most likely personify as responsible for the events that led up to his being wounded on the battlefield.

"Frank," I asked, "what do you think about the President of the United States?"

He seemed to be considering for a minute, or maybe he was only waiting to gather sufficient breath to make an answer. He had been lying with his eyes directed steadfastly toward the ceiling. Now he turned his face slowly toward me. His eyes, sunken slightly in their sockets, shone feverishly. His pinched, hollow cheeks were still swarthy, but the background of the white pillow made them look wan Slowly he moistened his lips, and then he said:

"Say—say—that guy—that guy's—got hair—on his chest."

That was the opinion of the "dying Wop."

After Frank's removal from our ward, the rest of us frequently sent messages of cheer down to him. These

messages were usually carried by a young American woman who had a particular interest in our ward. Not strange to say, she had donned a Red Cross nursing uniform on the same day that most of us arrived in that ward. She was one of the American women who brought us fruit, ice cream, candy and cigarettes. She wrote letters for us to our mothers. She worked long hours, night and day, for us. In her absence, one day, the ward went into session and voted her its guardian angel. Out of modesty, I was forced to answer "Present" instead of "Aye" to the roll-call. The Angel was and is my wife.

As Official Ward Angel it was among the wife's duties to handle the matter of visitors, of which there were many. It seemed, during those early days in June, that every American woman in France dropped whatever war work she was doing and rushed to the American hospitals to be of whatever service she could. And it was not easy work these women accomplished. There was very little "forehead-rubbing" or "moving picture nursing." Much of it was tile corridor scrubbing and pan cleaning. They stopped at no tasks they were called upon to perform. Many of them worked themselves sick during the long hours of that rush period.

Sometimes the willingness, eagerness and sympathy of some of the visitors produced humourous little incidents in our hospital life. Nearly all of the women entering our ward would stop at the foot of "Big Boy's" bed. They would learn of his paralysed condition from the chart attached to the foot of the bed. Then they would mournfully shake their heads and slowly pronounce the words "Poor boy."

And above all things in the world distasteful to Big Boy was that one expression "Poor boy" because as

soon as the kindly intentioned women would leave the room, the rest of the ward would take up the "Poor boy" chorus until Big Boy got sick of it. Usually, however, before leaving the ward the woman visitor would take from a cluster of flowers on her arm, one large red rose and this she would solemnly desposit on Big Boy's defenceless chest.

Big Boy would smile up to her a look which she would accept and interpret as one of deep, undying gratitude. The kindly-intentioned one surrounding herself with that benediction that is derived from a sacred duty well performed, would walk slowly from the room and as the door would close behind her, Big Boy's gruff drawling voice would sing out in a call for the orderly.

"Dan, remove the funeral decorations," he would order.

Dan Sullivan, our orderly, was the busiest man in the hospital. Big Boy liked to smoke, but, being paralysed, he required assistance. At regular intervals during the day the ward room door, which was close to Big Boy's bed, would open slowly and through the gap four or six inches wide the rest of the ward would get a glimpse of Dan standing in the opening with his arms piled high with pots and utensils, and a cigarette hanging from the corner of his mouth.

With one hand he would extract the cigarette, insert hand and arm through the opening in the door until it hovered above Big Boy's face. Then the hand would descend and the cigarette would be inserted in Big Boy's mouth just as you would stick a pin in a pin-cushion. Big Boy would lie back comfortably and puff away like a Mississippi steamboat for four or five minutes and then the door would open just a crack again, the mysterious hand and arm would reach in once more and the

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cigarette would be plucked out. That was the way Big Boy got his "smokes."

If Big Boy's voice was gruff, there was still a gruffer voice that used to come from a man in the corner of the ward to the left of my bed. During the first four or five days I was an inmate of the ward, I was most interested in all the voices I heard because I lay in total darkness. The bandages extended down from the top of my head to my upper lip, and I did not know whether or not I ever would see again. I would listen carefully to all remarks within ear-shot, whether they be from doctors, nurses or patients. I listened in the hope that from them I might learn whether or not there was a possibility of my regaining vision. But all of their remarks with regard to my condition were ambiguous and unsatisfactory. But from this I gained a listening habit and that was how I became particularly interested in the very gruff voice that came from the corner on my left.

Other patients directing remarks into that corner would address them to a man whom they would call by name "Red Shannahan." I was quick to connect the gruff voice and the name "Red Shannahan," and as I had lots of time and nothing else to do, I built up in my mind's eye a picture of a tall, husky, rough and ready, tough Irishman, with red hair—a man of whom it would be conceivable that he had wiped out some two or three German regiments before they got him. To find out more about this character, I called over to him one day.

"Red Shannahan, are you there?" I said.

"Yes, Mr. Gibbons, I'm here," came the reply, and I was immensely surprised because it was not the gruff voice at all. It was the mild, unchanged voice of a boy, a boy whose tones were still in the upper register. The reply

seemed almost girlish in comparison with the gruffer tones of the other patients and I marvelled that the owner of this polite, mannerly, high-pitched voice could be known by any such name as "Red Shannahan." I determined upon further investigation.

"Red Shannahan, what work did you do before you became a United States soldier?" I asked.

"Mr. Gibbons," came the reply, almost girlishly, "I am from Baltimore. I drove the wagon for Mr. Bishop, the canary bird and gold fish man."

All that had happened to this canary bird fancier and gold fish tamer was that he had killed two Germans and captured three before they got him.

Among those who came to visit us in that ward, there appeared one day a man I had not seen in many years. When I knew him last he had been a sport-loving fellow-student of mine at college and one of the fastest, hardest-fighting ends our 'Varsity football squad ever had. Knowing this disposition of the man, I was quite surprised to see on the sleeve of his khaki service uniform the red shield and insignia of the Knights of Columbus.

I was well aware of the very valuable work done by this institution wherever American soldiers are in France, but I could not imagine this former college chum of mine being engaged in such work instead of being in the service. He noticed my silence and he said, "Gib, do you remember that game with the Indians on Thanksgiving Day?"

"Yes," I replied, "they hurt your leg that day."

"Yes," replied my old college mate, whom we might as well call MacDougal inasmuch as that was not his name. "Yes, they took that leg away from me three years later."

I knew then why MacDougal was with the K. C. and

I wondered what service he would perform in our ward in the name of his organisation. I soon found out. Without introduction, MacDougal proceeded to the bedside of Dan Bailey, the Infantryman with one leg off, who was lying in a bed on my right. MacDougal walked back and forth two or three times past the foot of Bailey's bed.

"How does that look?" he said to Bailey. "Do I walk all right?"

"Looks all right to me," replied Bailey; "what's the matter with you?"

McDougal then began jumping, skipping and hopping up and down and across the floor at the foot of Bailey's bed. Finishing these exercises breathlessly, he again addressed himself to the sufferer with one leg.

"How did that look?" he said. "Did that look all right?"

"I don't see anything the matter with you," replied Bailey, "unless it is that you're in the wrong ward."

Then MacDougal stood close by Bailey's bedside where the boy with one leg could watch him closely. MacDougal took his cane and struck his own right leg a resounding whack. And we all knew by the sound of the blow that the leg he struck was wooden.

In that peculiar way did MacDougal bring into the life of Dan Bailey new interest and new prospects. He proved to Dan Bailey that for the rest of his life Dan Bailey with an artificial limb could walk about and jump and skip and hop almost as well as people with two good legs. That was the service performed by the Knights of Columbus in our ward.

There was one other organisation in that hospital that deserves mention. It was the most exclusive little clique and rather inclined towards snobbishness. I was a mem-

ber of it. We used to look down on the ordinary wounded cases that had two eyes. We enjoyed, either rightly or wrongly, a feeling of superiority. Death comes mighty close when it nicks an eye out of your head. All of the one-eyed cases and some of the no-eyed cases received attention in one certain ward, and it was to this ward after my release from the hospital that I used to go every day for fresh dressings for my wounds. Every time I entered the ward a delegation of one-eyed would greet me as a comrade and present me with a petition. In this petition I was asked and urged to betake myself to the hospital library, to probe the depths of the encyclopædias and from their wordy innards tear out one name for the organisation of the one-eyed. This was to be our life long club, they said, and the insistence was that the name above all should be a "classy" name. So it came to pass that after much research and debate one name was accepted and from that time on we became known as the Cyclops Club.

A wonderful Philadelphia surgeon was in charge of the work in that ward. Hundreds of American soldiers for long years after the war will thank him for seeing. I thank him for my sight now. His name is Dr. Fewell. The greatest excitement in the ward prevailed one day when one of the doctor's assistants entered carrying several flat, hard wood cases, each of them about a yard square. The cases opened like a book and were laid flat on the table. Their interiors were lined with green velvet and there on the shallow receptacles in the green velvet were just dozens of eyes, gleaming unblinkingly up at us.

A shout went up and down the ward and the Cyclopians gathered around the table. There was a grand

grab right and left. Everybody tried to get a handful. There was some difficulty reassorting the grabs. Of course, it happened, that fellows that really needed blue or grey ones, managed to get hold of black ones or brown ones, and some confusion existed while they traded back and forth to match up proper colours, shades and sizes.

One Cyclopian was not in on the grab. In addition to having lost one eye, he had received about a pound and a half of assorted hardware in his back, and these flesh wounds confined him to his bed. He had been sleeping and he suddenly awoke during the distribution of the glassware. He apparently became alarmed with the thought that he was going to be left out of consideration. I saw him sit bolt upright in bed as he shouted clear across the ward:

"Hey, Doc, pass the grapes."

When it became possible for me to leave that hospital, I went to another one three blocks away. This was a remarkable institution that had been maintained by wealthy Americans living in France before the war. I was assigned to a room on the third floor—a room adjoining a sun parlour, overlooking a beautiful Old World garden with a lagoon, rustic bridges, trees and shrubbery.

In early June, when that flood of American wounded had come back from the Marne, it had become necessary to erect hospital ward tents in the garden and there a number of our wounded were cared for. I used to notice that every day two orderlies would carry out from one of the small tents a small white cot on which there lay an American soldier. They would place the cot on the green grass where the sunlight, finding its way through the leafy branches of the tree, would shine down

upon the form of this young—this very young—fighter from the U. S. A.

He was just two months over seventeen years of age. He had deliberately and patriotically lied one year on his age in order that he might go to France and fight beneath our flag.

He was wounded, but his appearance did not indicate how badly. There were no bandages about his head, arms or body. There was nothing to suggest the severity of his injuries—nothing save his small round spot on the side of his head where the surgeons had shaved away the hair—just a small round spot that marked the place where a piece of German hand-grenade had touched the skull.

This little fellow had forgotten everything. He could not remember—all had slipped his mind save for the three or four lines of one little song, which was the sole remaining memory that bridged the gap of four thousand miles between him and his home across the sea.

Over and over again he would sing it all day long as he lay there on the cot with the sunlight streaming all over him. His sweet boyish voice would come up through the leafy branches to the windows of my room.

I frequently noticed my nurse standing there at the window listening to him. Then I would notice that her shoulders would shake convulsively and she would walk out of the room, wet eyed but silent. And the song the little fellow sang was this:

"Just try to picture me
Back home in Tennessee,
Right by my mother's knee
She thinks the world of me.
She will be there to meet me

With a hug and kiss she'll greet me,
When I get back, when I get back
To my home in Tennessee."

American doctors and American nurses, both by their skill and care and tenderness, nursed that little fellow back to complete recovery, made him remember everything and shortly afterward, well and cured, he started back, safe and sound, to his home in Tennessee.

Nothing I can ever say will overstate my estimation of the credit that is deserved by our American doctors and nurses for the great work they are doing. I am not alone in knowing this. I call to witness any Canadian, Englishman or Frenchman, that, if he is wounded, when in the ambulance, he usually voices one request, "Take me to an American hospital."

I knew of one man who entered that United States Military Base Hospital near Paris, with one bullet through the shoulder, another through an arm, an eye shot out and a compound fracture of the skull, and those American doctors and nurses by their attention and skilfulness made it possible for him to step back into boots and breeches and walk out of the hospital in ten days.

It so happens that I am somewhat familiar with the details in that case because I am the man.

CHAPTER XIX

"JULY 18TH"—THE TURN OF THE TIDE

THROUGH the steady growth of Marshal Foch's reserves, by the speedy arrival of American forces, the fourth German offensive of 1918, the personally directed effort launched by the Crown Prince on May 27th, had been brought to a standstill.

The German thrust toward Paris had been stopped by the Americans at Château-Thierry and in the Bois de Belleau. It would be an injustice not to record the great part played in that fighting by the French Army attacked, but it would be equally unjust not to specify as the French have gallantly done, that it was the timely arrival of American strength that swung the balance against the enemy. For the remainder of that month of June and up to the middle of July, the fighting was considered local in its character.

The German offensive had succeeded in pushing forward the enemy front until it formed a loop extending southward from the Aisne to the Valley of the Marne. This salient was called the Château-Thierry pocket. The line ran southward from a point east of Soissons to Château-Thierry, where it touched the Marne, thence eastward along both sides of the river to the vicinity of Oeuilly where it recrossed the Marne and extended northward to points beyond Rheims.

Château-Thierry was thus the peak of the German push—the apex of the triangle pointing toward Paris. The enemy supplied its forces in this peak principally by the road that ran southward from Soissons and

touched the Marne at Château-Thierry. To the west of this road and just south of the city of Soissons, is the forest of Villers-Cotterets. The enemy occupied the northern and eastern limits of the forest and the remainder of it was in the hands of the French.

This forest has always been considered one of the sentinels of Paris. It was located on the right flank of the German salient. It was a menace to that flank, and offered a most attractive opportunity for an Allied counter offensive from that direction. The Germans were not unmindful of this.

The enemy knew that in the forest of Villers-Cotterets it would be possible for Marshal Foch to mobilise his much-feared reserves by taking advantage of the natural screen provided by the forest. That Foch reserve still remained a matter for enemy consideration in spite of the fact that the successive German offensive since March 21st had met with considerable success with regard to the acquisition of territory. The Germans, however, had been unable to ascertain whether Foch had been forced to bring his reserves into the fight.

The situation demanded a full realisation by the enemy of the possible use of this reserve at any time and they knew that their lines in Villers-Cotterets Forest offered an ever present invitation for the sudden application of this reserve strength. Their lines at that point were necessarily weak by the superiority of the Allied position and, as a consequence, the Germans guarded this weak spot by holding in reserve behind the line a number of divisions of the Prussian Guard.

For the same reason, the enemy maintained constant observation of the French position. Their planes would fly over the forest every day taking photographs. They sought to discover any evidences indicating that Foch

might be preparing to strike a blow from that place. They made careful note of the traffic along the roads through the forest. They maintained a careful watch to ascertain whether new ammunition dumps were being concealed under the trees. Their observers tried to ascertain whether any additional hospital arrangements had been made by the French at that point. Any of these things would have indicated that the French were preparing to strike through the forest but the Germans found nothing to support their suspicions.

Nevertheless, they maintained their lines at maximum strength. A belief existed among the German High Command that an attack might be made on July 4th, out of consideration to American sentiment. When the attack did not develop on that day, they then thought that the French might possibly spring the blow on July 14th, in celebration of their own national fête day. And again they were disappointed in their surmises.

This protracted delay of an impending blow worried the enemy. The Germans realised full well that they were fighting against time. Their faith in the capacity of their submarines to prevent American strength from reaching the line, had been abandoned. They now knew that every day that passed meant just that many more American soldiers arriving in France, and the consequent strengthening of the Allied forces during a season when the Germans, through their repeated offensives, were suffering terrible losses and were consequently growing weaker.

So, on July 14th, when the Allied counter-offensive had still failed to materialise, the German forces, by the necessity for time, moved to a sudden and faulty decision. They convinced themselves that they had overestimated the Allied strength. They accepted the be-

lief that the reason Foch had not attacked was because he did not have sufficient strength to attack. With this, then, as a basis for their plans, they immediately launched another offensive, hoping that this might be the one in which they could deliver the final blow.

This action began on Monday morning, July 15th, and extended from Château-Thierry eastward along the valley of the Marne, northward to Rheims and thence eastward. By a remarkable coup, one small patrol of French and Americans deprived the enemy of the element of surprise in the attack. On the morning of the previous day, this patrol successfully raided the enemy lines to the east of Rheims and brought back prisoners from whom it was learned that the Germans intended striking on the following morning. The objectives of the offensive were the French cities of Épernay and Châlons. The accomplishment of this effort would have placed the Rheims salient in the hands of the enemy and brought the German lines southward to positions straddling the Marne, down the valley of which they would thus be able to launch another offensive on a straight road to Paris.

The Germans needed considerable strength for this new effort. To muster the shock divisions necessary for the attack, they had to weaken their lines elsewhere. The first reserves that they drew for this offensive were the Prussian Guard divisions which they had been holding in readiness in back of the weak spot in their line in the Villers-Cotterets Forest. Those divisions were hurriedly transported across the base of the V-shaped salient and thrown into the attack to the east and the southwest of Rheims.

The Germans found the Allied line prepared to receive them. Their attacking waves were mowed down

with terrific machine gun fire from French and American gunners, while at the same time heavy artillery barrages played upon the German back areas with deadly effect in the massed ranks of the reserves. The fighting was particularly vicious. It was destined to be the Germans' last action of a grand offensive nature in the entire war.

On the line east of Rheims, the German assault was particularly strong in one sector where it encountered the sturdy ranks of the Rainbow Division of United States National Guardsmen, drawn from a dozen or more different states in the Union. Regiments from Alabama and New York held the front line. Iowa and Ohio were close in support. In the support positions, sturdy youngsters from Illinois, Indiana, and Minnesota manned the American artillery.

The French general commanding the sector had not considered it possible that this comparatively small American force could withstand the first onslaught of the Germans. He had made elaborate plans for a withdrawal to high ground two or three miles southward, from which he hoped to be able to resist the enemy to greater advantage. But all day long, through the 15th and the 16th and the 17th of July, those American lines held, and the advancing waves of German storm troops melted before our guns. Anticipating a renewal of the attack on the next day, General Gouraud issued an order on the evening of July 17th. It read:

"To the French and American Soldiers of the Army.

"We may be attacked from one moment to another. You all feel that a defensive battle was never engaged in under more favourable conditions. We are warned, and we are on our guard. We

have received strong reinforcements of infantry and artillery. You will fight on ground, which, by your assiduous labour, you have transformed into a formidable fortress, into a fortress which is invincible if the passages are well guarded.

"The bombardment will be terrible. You will endure it without weakness. The attack in a cloud of dust and gas will be fierce but your positions and your armament are formidable.

"The strong and brave hearts of free men beat in your breast. None will look behind, none will give way. Every man will have but one thought —'Kill them, kill them in abundance, until they have had enough.' And therefore your General tells you it will be a glorious day."

And so the line held, although the French General had in preparation the plans for withdrawal. When, at the end of the third day, the American line still occupied the same position, the French General found that his labour in preparing the plans for withdrawal had been for nothing. He is reported to have thrown his hands up in the air and remarked, "There doesn't seem to be anything to do but to let the war be fought out where the New York Irish and the Alabamans want to fight it."

There was one humorous incident worthy of record in that fighting. Great rivalry existed between the New York regiment and the Alabama regiment, both of which happened to be units of the same brigade. Both the New Yorkers and the Alabamans had a mutual hatred for the German but, in addition to that, each of them was possessed with a mutual dislike for the other. There had been frequent clashes of a more or less sportsman-

like and fistic nature between men from both of the regiments.

On the second day of the fighting, the Germans had sent over low-flying airplanes which skimmed the tops of our trenches and sprayed them with machine gun fire. A man from Alabama, who had grown up from childhood with a squirrel rifle under his arm, accomplished something that had never been done before in the war. From his position in a trench, he took careful aim with his rifle and brought down one of the German planes. It was the first time in the history of the Western Front that a rifleman on the ground had done this.

When the colonel of the New York regiment heard this, he was wild with envy and let it be known that there would be trouble brewing unless his regiment at least equalled the feat. So, on the following day, an Irishman in the ranks stood up and brought one German plane down to the credit of the old Sixty-ninth.

To the southwest of Rheims, Germans, who succeeded in breaking through the lines at one place on the south banks of the Marne, encountered American reinforcements and were annihilated to the number of five thousand. At no place did the enemy meet with the success desired.

The Germans had launched their attack at six o'clock on the morning of July 15th. At Vaux their demonstration was considered a feint, but along the Marne to the east of Château-Thierry, between Fossy and Mezy, the assaulting waves advanced with fury and determination. At one place, twenty-five thousand of the enemy crossed the river, and the small American forces in front of them at that place were forced to retire on Conde-en-Bire. In a counter attack, we succeeded in driving fif-

teen thousand of them back to the north bank, the remaining ten thousand representing casualties with the exception of fifteen hundred, who were captured.

Further eastward, the Germans established bridgehead positions on the south bank of the river at Dormas. The enemy enjoyed a minor success in an attack on the line near Bligny to the southwest of Rheims, where Italian troops fought with remarkable valour. Everywhere else the lines held solid and upon the close of that first night, Marshal Foch said, "I am satisfied—*Je suis content.*"

At dawn the following day, the enemy's futile efforts were resumed along the river east of Château-Thierry. The Germans suffered appalling losses in their efforts to place pontoon bridges at Gland and at Mareuil-le-Port. St. Agnan and La Chapelle Monthodon fell into the hands of Americans on the same day.

On the 17th, the enemy's endeavours to reach Festigny on both banks of the river came to naught, but to the southeast of Rheims, his assaulting waves reached the northern limits of Montagne Forest. The Germans were trying to pinch out the Rheims salient. This was the condition of the opposing lines on the night of July 17th, —the night that preceded the day on which the tide of victory turned for the Allies.

Foch was now ready to strike. The Allied Commander-in-Chief had decided to deliver his blow on the right flank of the German salient. The line chosen for the Allied assault was located between a point south of Soissons and Château-Thierry. It represented a front of some twenty-five miles extending southward from the valley of the Aisne to the Marne. Villers-Cotterets Forest was the key position for the Allies.

It was from out that forest that the full strength of

the blow was to be delivered. To make the blow effective at that most vital point, Marshal Foch needed a strong and dependable assaulting force. He needed three divisions of the hardest fighting soldiers that he could get. He had a considerable army to select from. As Commander-in-Chief of all the Allied armies, he was in command of all of the British army, all of the French army, all of the American army, the Italian, the Belgian,—all of the military forces of the Allied nations of the world. Marshal Foch's command numbered eleven million bayonets.

The Commander-in-Chief had all of these veteran fighting men from which he could select the three divisions necessary to deliver this blow upon which the civilisation of the world depended.

The first division he chose was the Foreign Legion of the French army. In four years of bloody fighting, the Foreign Legion, composed of soldiers of fortune from every country in the world, had never been absent in an attack. It had lived up thoroughly to its reputation as the most fearless unit of shock troops in the French army.

And then for the other two divisions that were needed, Marshal Foch selected, from all the eleven million men under his command, the First and the Second Regular United States Army Divisions. The Second Division included the immortal Brigade of United States Marines, that had covered themselves with glory in the Bois de Belleau.

It was a great distinction for those two American divisions to have thus been selected to play such a vital part in the entire war. It was an honour that every officer and man in both divisions felt keenly.

I have in my map case a torn and much folded little

piece of paper. I received it that night of July 17th in Villers-Cotterets Forest. A similar piece of paper was received by every officer in those two American divisions. To me this piece of paper represents the order which resulted in victory for the Allied world. It reads:

Headquarters Third Army Corps American Expeditionary Forces,

France, July 17, 1918

Memorandum:

The Third Corps of the American Expeditionary Forces has been created and consists of the 1st. and 2nd. Divisions, two divisions that are known throughout France.

Officers and men of the Third Corps, you have been deemed worthy to be placed beside the best veteran French troops. See that you prove worthy. Remember that in what is now coming you represent the whole American nation.

R. L. Bullard,
Major General,
Commanding 3rd. Corps.

The German planes flying high over Villers-Cotterets Forest all day during the 17th, had seen nothing. The appearance of all the myriad roads that cross and recross the forest in all directions was normal. But that night things began to happen in the forest.

For once at least, the elements were favourable to our cause. There was no moon. The night was very dark and under the trees the blackness seemed impenetrable. A heavy downpour of rain began and although it turned most of the roads into mud, the leafy roof of the forest held much of the moisture and offered some

protection to the thousands of men who spent the night beneath it. Thunder rolled as I had never heard it roll in France before. The sound drowned the occasional boom of distant cannon. At intervals, terrific crashes would be followed by blinding flashes of lightning as nature's bolts cut jagged crevices in the sombre sky and vented their fury upon some splintered giant of the forest.

The immediate front was silent—comparatively silent if one considered the din of the belligerent elements. In the opposing front lines in the northern and eastern limits of the forest, German and Frenchmen alike huddled in their rude shelters to escape the rain.

Then, along every road leading through the forest to the north and to the east, streams of traffic began to pour. All of it was moving forward toward the front. No traffic bound for the rear was permitted. Every inch of available road space was vitally necessary for the forces in movement. The roads that usually accommodated one line of vehicles moving forward and one line moving to the rear, now represented two streams —solid streams—moving forward. In those streams were gun carriages, caissons, limbers, ammunition carts and grunting tractors hauling large field pieces.

In the gutters on either side of the road, long lines of American infantry plodded forward through the mud and darkness. In the occasional flash of a light, I could see that they were equipped for heavy fighting. Many of them had their coats off, their sleeves rolled up, while beads of sweat stood out on the young faces that shown eager beneath the helmets. On their backs they carried, in addition to their cumbersome packs, extra shoes and extra bandoliers of cartridges.

From their shoulders were suspended gas masks and

haversacks. Their waists were girded with loaded ammunition belts, with bayonet hanging at the left side. Some of them wore grenade aprons full of explosives. Nearly all of them carried their rifles or machine gun parts slung across their backs as they leaned forward under their burdens and plunged wearily on into the mud and darkness, the thunder and lightning, the world destiny that was before them. Their lines were interspersed with long files of plodding mules dragging small, two-wheeled, narrow gauge carts loaded down with machine gun ammunition.

Under the trees to either side of the road, there was more movement. American engineers struggled forward through the underbrush carrying, in addition to their rifles and belts, rolls of barbed wire, steel posts, picks and shovels and axes and saws. Beside them marched the swarthy, undersized, bearded veterans of the Foreign Legion. Further still under the trees, French cavalry, with their lances slung slantwise across their shoulders, rode their horses in and out between the giant trunks.

At road intersections, I saw mighty metal monsters with steel plated sides splotched with green and brown and red paint. These were the French tanks that were to take part in the attack. They groaned and grunted on their grinding gears as they manœuvred about for safer progress. In front of each tank there walked a man who bore suspended from his shoulders on his back, a white towel so that the unseen directing genius in the tank's turrent could steer his way through the underbrush and crackling saplings that were crushed down under the tread of this modern Juggernaut.

There was no confusion, no outward manifestations of excitement. There was no rattle of musketry, shout-

ing of commands or waving of swords. Officers addressed their men in whispers. There was order and quiet save for the roll of thunder and the eternal dripping of water from the wet leaves, punctuated now and then by the ear-splitting crashes that followed each nearby flash of lightning.

Through it all, everything moved. It was a mighty mobilisation in the dark. Everything was moving in one direction—forward—all with the same goal, all with the same urging, all with the same determination, all with the same hope. The forest was ghostly with their forms. It seemed to me that night in the damp darkness of Villers-Cotterets Forest that every tree gave birth to a man for France.

All night long the gathering of that sinister synod continued. All night long those furtive forces moved through the forest. They passed by every road, by every lane, through every avenue of trees. I heard the whispered commands of the officers. I heard the sloshing of the mud under foot and the occasional muffled curse of some weary marcher who would slip to the ground under the weight of his burden; and I knew, all of us knew, that at the zero hour, 4:35 o'clock in the morning, all hell would land on the German line, and these men from the trees would move forward with the fate of the world in their hands.

There was some suspense. We knew that if the Germans had had the slightest advance knowledge about that mobilisation of Foch's reserves that night, they would have responded with a downpour of gas shells, which spreading their poisonous fumes under the wet roof of the forest, might have spelt slaughter for 70,000 men.

But the enemy never knew. They never even suspected. And at the tick of 4:35 A.M., the heavens

seemed to crash asunder, as tons and tons of hot metal sailed over the forest, bound for the German line.

That mighty artillery eruption came from a concentration of all the guns of all calibres of all the Allies that Foch could muster. It was a withering blast and where it landed in that edge of the forest occupied by the Germans, the quiet of the dripping black night was suddenly turned into a roaring inferno of death.

Giant tree trunks were blow high into the air and splintered into match-wood. Heavy projectiles bearing delayed action fuses, penetrated the ground to great depth before exploding and then, with the expansion of their powerful gases, crushed the enemy dug-outs as if they were egg shells.

Then young America—your sons and your brothers and your husbands, shoulder to shoulder with the French —went over the top to victory.

The preliminary barrage moved forward crashing the forest down about it. Behind it went the tanks ambling awkwardly but irresistibly over all obstructions. Those Germans that had not been killed in the first terrific blast, came up out of their holes only to face French and American bayonets, and the "Kamerad" chorus began at once.

Our assaulting waves moved forward, never hesitating, never faltering. Ahead of them were the tanks giving special attention to enemy machine gun nests that manifested stubbornness. We did not have to charge those death-dealing nests that morning as we did in the Bois de Belleau. The tanks were there to take care of them. One of these would move toward a nest, flirt around it several minutes and then politely sit on it. It would never be heard from thereafter.

It was an American whirlwind of fighting fury that

swept the Germans in front of it early that morning. Aeroplanes had been assigned to hover over the advance and make reports on all progress. A dense mist hanging over the forest made it impossible for the aviators to locate the Divisional Headquarters to which they were supposed to make the reports. These dense clouds of vapour obscured the earth from the eyes of the airmen, but with the rising sun the mists lifted.

Being but a month out of the hospital and having spent a rather strenuous night, I was receiving medical attention at daybreak in front of a dressing station not far from the headquarters of Major General Harbord commanding the Second Division. As I lay there looking up through the trees, I saw a dark speck diving from the sky. Almost immediately I could hear the hum of its motors growing momentarily louder as it neared the earth. I thought the plane was out of control and expected to see it crash to the ground near me.

Several hundred feet above the tree tops, it flattened its wings and went into an easy swoop so that its undergear seemed barely to skim the uppermost branches. The machine pursued a course immediately above one of the roads. Something dropped from it. It was a metal cylinder that glistened in the rays of the morning sun. Attached to it was a long streamer of fluttering white material. It dropped easily to the ground nearby. I saw an American signalman, who had been following its descent, pick it up. He opened the metal container and extracted the message containing the first aerial observations of the advance of the American lines. It stated that large numbers of prisoners had been captured and were bound for the rear.

Upon receipt of this information, Division Headquarters moved forward on the jump. Long before noon

General Harbord, close behind his advancing troops, opened headquarters in the shattered farm buildings of Verte Feuille, the first community centre that had been taken by our men that morning. Prisoners were coming back in droves.

I encountered one column of disarmed Germans marching four abreast with the typical attitude of a "Kamerad" procession. The first eight of the prisoners carried on their shoulders two rudely constructed litters made from logs and blankets. A wounded American was on one litter and a wounded Frenchman on the other.

A number of German knapsacks had been used to elevate the shoulders of both of the wounded men so that they occupied positions half sitting and half reclining. Both of them were smoking cigarettes and chatting gaily as they rode high and mighty on the shoulders of their captives, while behind them stretched a regal retinue of eight hundred more.

As this column proceeded along one side of the road, the rest of the roadway was filled with men, guns and equipment all moving forward. Scottish troops in kilts swung by and returned the taunts which our men laughingly directed at their kilts and bare knees.

Slightly wounded Americans came back guarding convoys of prisoners. They returned loaded with relics of the fighting. It was said that day that German prisoners had explained that in their opinion, the British were in the war because they hated Germany and that the French were in the war because the war was in France, but that Americans seemed to be fighting to collect souveniers.

I saw one of these American souvenier collectors bound for the rear. In stature he was one of the short-

est men I had ever seen in our uniform. He must have spent long years in the cavalry, because he was frightfully bowlegged. He was herding in front of him two enormous German prisoners who towered head and shoulders above him.

He manifested a confidence in his knowledge of all prisoners and things German. Germans were "foreigners." "Foreigners" spoke a foreign language. Therefore to make a German understand you, it was only necessary to speak with them in a foreign language. French was a foreign language so the bowlegged American guard made use of his limited knowledge.

"Allay! Allay! Allay veet t'-ell outer here," he urged his charges.

He was wearing his helmet back on his head so that there was exposed a shock of black, blood-matted hair on his forehead. A white bandage ran around his forehead and on the right side of his face a strip of cotton gauze connected with another white bandage around his neck. There was a red stain on the white gauze over the right cheek.

His face was rinsed with sweat and very dirty. In one hand he carried a large chunk of the black German war bread—once the property of his two prisoners. With his disengaged hand he conveyed masses of the food to his lips which were circled with a fresco of crumbs.

His face was wreathed in a remarkable smile—a smile of satisfaction that caused the corners of his mouth to turn upward toward his eyes. I also smiled when I made a casual inventory of the battlefield loot with which he had decorated his person. Dangling by straps from his right hip were five holsters containing as many German automatic pistols of the Lueger make, worth about

$35 apiece. Suspended from his right shoulder by straps to his left hip, were six pairs of highly prized German field glasses, worth about $100 apiece. I acquired a better understanding of his contagious smile of property possession when I inquired his name and his rank. He replied:

"Sergeant Harry Silverstein."

Later, attracted by a blast of extraordinary profanity, I approached one of our men who was seated by the roadside. A bullet had left a red crease across his cheek but this was not what had stopped him. The hobnail sole of his shoe had been torn off and he was trying to fasten it back on with a combination of straps. His profane denunciations included the U. S. Quartermaster Department, French roads, barbed wire, hot weather and, occasionally, the Germans.

"This sure is a hell of a mess," he said, "for a fellow to find himself in this fix just when I was beginning to catch sight of 'em. I enlisted in the army to come to France to kill Germans but I never thought for one minute they'd bring me over here and try to make me run 'em to death. What we need is greyhounds. And as usual the Q. M. fell down again. Why, there wasn't a lassoe in our whole company."

The prisoners came back so fast that the Intelligence Department was flooded. The divisional intelligence officer asked me to assist in the interrogation of the captives. I questioned some three hundred of them.

An American sergeant who spoke excellent German, interrogated. I sat behind a small table in a field and the sergeant would call the prisoners forward one by one. In German he asked one captive what branch of the service he belonged to. The prisoner wishing to display his

knowledge of English and at the same time give vent to some pride, replied in English.

"I am of the storm troop," he said.

"Storm troop?" replied the American sergeant, "do you know what we are? We are from Kansas. We are Cycloners."

Another German student of English among the prisoners was represented in the person of a pompous German major, who, in spite of being a captive, maintained all the dignity of his rank. He stood proudly erect and held his head high. He wore a disgusted look on his face, as though the surroundings were painful. His uniform was well pressed, his linen was clean, his boots were well polished, he was clean shaven. There was not a speck of dust upon him and he did not look like a man who had gone through the hell of battle that morning. The American sergeant asked him in German to place the contents of his pockets on the table.

"I understand English," he replied superciliously, with a strong accent, as he complied with the request. I noticed, however, that he neglected to divest himself of one certain thing that caught my interest. It was a leather thong that extended around his neck and disappeared between the first and second buttons of his tunic. Curiosity forced me to reach across the table and extract the hidden terminal of that thong. I found suspended on it the one thing in all the world that exactly fitted me and that I wanted. It was a one-eyed field glass. I thanked him.

He told me that he had once been an interne in a hospital in New York but happening to be in Germany at the outbreak of the war, he had immediately entered the army and had risen to the rank of a major in the Medical

Corps. I was anxious for his opinion, obvious as it might have seemed.

"What do you think of the fighting capacity of the American soldier?" I asked him.

"I do not know," he replied in the accented but dignified tones of a superior who painfully finds himself in the hands of one considered inferior. "I have never seen him fight. He is persuasive—yes.

"I was in a dug-out with forty German wounded in the cellar under the Beaurepaire Farm, when the terrible bombardment landed. I presume my gallant comrades defending the position died at their posts, because soon the barrage lifted and I walked across the cellar to the bottom of the stairs and looked up.

"There in the little patch of white light on the level of the ground above me, I saw the first American soldier I have seen in the war. But he did not impress me much as a soldier. I did not like his carriage or his bearing.

"He wore his helmet far back on his head. And he did not have his coat on. His collar was not buttoned; it was rolled back and his throat was bare. His sleeves were rolled up to the elbow. And he had a grenade in each hand.

"Just then he looked down the stairs and saw me—saw me standing there—saw me, a major—and he shouted roughly, 'Come out of there, you big Dutch B——d, or I'll spill a basketful of these on you.'"

All through that glorious day of the 18th, our lines swept forward victoriously. The First Division fought it out on the left, the Foreign Legion in the centre and the Second Division with the Marines pushed forward on the right. Village after village fell into our hands.

We captured batteries of guns and thousands of prisoners.

On through the night the Allied assault continued. Our men fought without water or food. All road space behind the lines was devoted to the forwarding of reserves, artillery and munitions. By the morning of the 19th, we had so far penetrated the enemy's lines that we had crossed the road running southward from Soissons to Château-Thierry, thereby disrupting the enemy's communications between his newly established base and the peak of his salient. Thus exposed to an enveloping movement that might have surrounded large numbers, there was nothing left for the Germans to do but to withdraw.

The Allied army commander, who directed the Americans on that glorious day, was General Joseph Mangin. His opinion of the immortal part played on that day by those two American divisions may be seen in the following order which he caused to be published:

Officers, Noncommissioned Officers, and Soldiers of the American Army:

Shoulder to shoulder with your French comrades, you threw yourselves into the counter-offensive begun on July 18th. You ran to it as if going to a feast. Your magnificent dash upset and surprised the enemy, and your indomitable tenacity stopped counter attacks by his fresh divisions. You have shown yourselves to be worthy sons of your great country and have gained the admiration of your brothers in arms.

Ninety-one cannon, 7,200 prisoners, immense booty, and ten kilometres of reconquered territory are your share of the trophies of this victory. Besides this, you have acquired a feeling of your superiority over the bar-

barian enemy against whom the children of liberty are fighting. To attack him is to vanquish him.

American comrades, I am grateful to you for the blood you generously spilled on the soil of my country. I am proud of having commanded you during such splendid days and to have fought with you for the deliverance of the world.

The Germans began backing off the Marne. From that day on, their movement to date has continued backward. It began July 18th. Two American Divisions played glorious parts in the crisis. It was their day. It was America's day. It was the turn of the tide.

CHAPTER XX

THE DAWN OF VICTORY

THE waited hour had come. The forced retreat of the German hordes had begun. Hard on their heels, the American lines started their northward push, backing the Boche off the Marne.

On the morning of July 21st I rode into Château-Thierry with the first American soldiers to enter the town. The Germans had evacuated hurriedly. Château-Thierry was reoccupied jointly by our forces and those of the French.

Here was the grave of German hopes. Insolent, imperialistic longings for the great prize, Paris, ended here. The dream of the Kultur conquest of the world had become a nightmare of horrible realisation that America was in the war. Pompously flaunted strategy crumpled at historic Château-Thierry.

That day of the occupation, the wrecked city was comparatively quiet. Only an occasional German shell—a final parting spite shell—whined disconsolately overhead and landed in a cloud of dust and débris in some vacant ruin that had once been a home.

For seven long weeks the enemy had been in occupation of that part of the city on the north bank of the river. Now the streets were littered with débris. Although the walls of most of the buildings seemed to be in good shape, the scene was one of utter devastation.

The Germans had built barracades across the streets —particularly the streets that led down to the river— because it was those streets that were swept with the

terrific fire of American machine guns. At the intersections of those streets the Germans under cover of night had taken up the cobblestones and built parapets to protect them from the hail of lead.

Wrecked furniture was hip deep on the Rue Carnot. Along the north bank of the river on the Quai de la Poterne and the Promenade de la Levée, the invader had left his characteristic mark. Shop after shop had been looted of its contents and the fronts of the pretty sidewalk cafés along this business thoroughfare had been reduced to shells of their former selves.

Not a single living being was in sight as we marched in. Some of the old townsfolk and some young children had remained but they were still under cover. Among these French people who had lived for seven weeks through the hell of battle that had raged about the town, was Madame de Prey, who was eighty-seven years old. To her, home meant more than life. She had spent the time in her cellar, caring for German wounded.

The town had been systematically pillaged. The German soldiers had looted from the shops much material which they had made up into packages to be mailed back to home folks in the Fatherland. The church, strangely enough, was picked out as a depository for their larcenies. Nothing from the robes of the priests down to the copper faucet of a water pipe had escaped their greed.

The advancing Americans did not linger in the town —save for small squads of engineers that busied themselves with the removal of the street obstructions and the supply organisations that perfected communication for the advancing lines. These Americans were Yankees

all—they comprised the 26th U. S. Division, representing the National Guard of New England.

Our lines kept pushing to the north. The Germans continued their withdrawal and the Allied necessity was to keep contact with them. This, the Yankee Division succeeded in doing. The first obstacle encountered to the north of Château-Thierry was the stand that the Germans made at the town of Epieds.

On July 23rd, our infantry had proceeded up a ravine that paralleled the road into Epieds. German machine guns placed on the hills about the village, swept them with a terrible fire. Our men succeeded in reaching the village, but the Germans responded with such a terrific downpour of shell that our weakened ranks were forced to withdraw and the Germans re-entered the town.

On the following day we renewed the attack with the advantage of positions which we had won during the night in the Bois de Trugny and the Bois de Châtelet. We advanced from three sides and forced the Germans to evacuate. Trugny, the small village on the edge of the woods, was the scene of more bloody fighting which resulted in our favour.

Further north of Epieds, the Germans having entrenched themselves along the roadway, had fortified the same with a number of machine guns which commanded the flat terrain in such a way as to make a frontal attack by infantry waves most costly. The security of the Germans in this position received a severe shock when ten light automobiles, each one mounting one or two machine guns, started up the road toward the enemy, firing as they sped. It was something new. The Germans wanted to surrender, but the speed of the cars obviated such a possibility. So the enemy fled before our gasoline cavalry.

The Germans were withdrawing across the river Ourcq, whose valley is parallel to that of the Marne and just to the north. The enemy's intentions of making a stand here were frustrated by violent attacks, which succeeded in carrying our forces into positions on the north side of the Ourcq. These engagements straightened out the Allied line from the Ourcq on the west to Fère-en-Tardenois on the east, which had been taken the same day by French and American troops.

By this time the German withdrawal was becoming speedier. Such strong pressure was maintained by our men against the enemy's rear guards that hundreds of tons of German ammunition had to be abandoned and fell into our hands. Still the retreat bore no evidences of a rout.

The enemy retired in orderly fashion. He bitterly contested every foot of ground he was forced to give. The American troops engaged in those actions had to fight hard for every advance. The German backed out of the Marne salient as a Western "bad man" would back out of a saloon with an automatic pistol in each hand.

Those charges that our men made across the muddy flats of the Ourcq deserve a place in the martial history of America. They faced a veritable hell of machine gun fire. They went through barrages of shrapnel and high explosive shell. They invaded small forests that the enemy had flooded with poison gas. No specific objectives were assigned. The principal order was "Up and at 'em" and this was reinforced by every man's determination to keep the enemy on the run now that they had been started.

Even the enemy's advantage of high positions north of the river failed to hold back the men from New York,

from Iowa, Alabama, Ohio, Illinois, Minnesota and Indiana, who had relieved the hard fighting Yankees. These new American organisations went up against fresh German divisions that had been left behind with orders to hold at all cost. But nothing the enemy could do could prevent our crossing of the Ourcq.

On July 30th the fighting had become most intense in character. The fact that the town of Sergy was captured, lost and recaptured nine times within twenty-four hours, is some criterion of the bitterness of the struggle. This performance of our men can be better understood when it is stated that the enemy opposing them there consisted of two fresh divisions of the Kaiser's finest—his Prussian Guard.

After that engagement with our forces, the Fourth Prussian Guard Division went into an enforced retirement. When our men captured Sergy the last time, they did so in sufficient strength to withhold it against repeated fierce counter attacks by a Bavarian Guard division that had replaced the wearied Prussians.

But before the crack Guard Division was withdrawn from the line, it had suffered terrible losses at our hands. Several prisoners captured said that their company had gone into the fight one hundred and fifty strong and only seven had survived. That seven were captured by our men in hand to hand fighting.

While our engineer forces repaired the roads and constructed bridges in the wake of our advancing lines, the enemy brought to that part of the front new squadrons of air fighters which were sent over our lines for the purpose of observation and interference with communications. They continually bombed our supply depots and ammunition dumps.

After the crossing of the Ourcq the American advance

reached the next German line of resistance, which rested on two terminal strongholds. One was in the Forêt de Nesles and the other was in the Bois de Meunière.

The fighting about these two strong points was particularly fierce. In the Bois de Meunière and around the town of Cièrges, the German resistance was most determined. About three hundred Jaegers held Hill 200, which was located in the centre of Cièrges Forest, just to the south of the village of the same name. They were well provided with machine guns and ammunition. They were under explicit orders to hold and they did.

Our men finally captured the position at the point of the bayonet. Most of its defenders fought to the death. The capture of the hill was the signal for a renewal of our attacks against the seemingly impregnable Meunière woods. Six times our advancing waves reached the German positions in the southern edge of the woods and six times we were driven back.

There were some American Indians in the ranks of our units attacking there—there were lumber jacks and farmer boys and bookkeepers, and they made heroic rushes against terrific barriers of hidden machine guns. But after a day of gallant fighting they had been unable to progress.

Our efforts had by no means been exhausted. The following night our artillery concentrated on the southern end of the woods and literally turned it into an inferno with high explosive shells. Early in the morning we moved to the attack again. Two of the Kaiser's most reputable divisions, the 200th Jaegers and the 216th Reserve, occupied the wood. The fighting in the wood was fierce and bloody, but it was more to the liking of our men than the rushes across fire-swept fields. Our

men went to work with the bayonet. And for six hours they literally carved their way through four kilometres of the forest. Before ten o'clock the next morning, our lines lay to the north of the woods.

In consolidating the gains in the woods, our men surrounded in a small clearing some three hundred of the enemy who refused to surrender. American squads advanced with the bayonet from all sides. The Germans were fighting for their lives. Only three remained to accept the ignominy of capture.

Our forward progress continued and by August 4th the Germans were withdrawing across the Vesle River. The immediate objective that presented itself to the Americans was the important German supply depot at Fismes. It was in and around Fismes that some of the bloodiest fighting in the second battle of the Marne took place. The capture of Fismes was the crowning achievement of one American division that so distingushed itself as to be made the subject of a special report to the French General Headquarters by the French army in which the Americans fought. In part, the report read:

"On Aug. 4th the infantry combats were localized with terrible fury. The outskirts of Fismes were solidly held by the Germans, where their advance groups were difficult to take. The Americans stormed them and reduced them with light mortars and thirty-sevens. They succeeded, though not without loss, and at the end of the day, thanks to this slow but sure tenacity, they were within one kilometre of Fismes and masters of Villes, Savoye and Chezelle Farm. All night long rains hindered their movements and rendered their following day's task more arduous. On their right the

French had, by similar stages, conquered a series of woods and swamps of Meunière Woods, to the east of St. Gilles, and were on the plateau of Bonne Maison Farm. To the left another American unit had been able to advance upon the Vesle to the east of St. Thibault.

"On Aug. 5th the artillery prepared for the attack on Fismes by a bombardment, well regulated, and the final assault was launched. The Americans penetrated into the village and then began the mean task of clearing the last point of resistance. That evening this task was almost completed. We held all the northern part of the village as far as Rheims road, and patrols were sent into the northern end of the village. Some even succeeded in crossing the Vesle, but were satisfied with making a reconnaisance, as the Germans still occupied the right bank of the river in great strength. All that was left to be accomplished was to complete the mopping up of Fismes and the strengthening of our positions to withstand an enemy counter attack.

"Such was the advance of one American division, which pushed the enemy forward from Roncheres on July 30th a distance of eighteen kilometres and crowned its successful advance with the capture of Fismes on Aug. 5th."

The German line on the Vesle river fell shortly after the capture of Fismes. The enemy was forced to fall back to his next natural line of defence on the Aisne. Between the Vesle and the Aisne, the Americans assisted the French in the application of such persistent pressure that the enemy's stubborn resistance was overcome and in many places he was forced to withdraw before he had time to destroy his depots of supply.

On August 9th, General Degoutte, commanding the Sixth French Army, issued the following order:

"Before the great offensive of July 18th, the American troops, forming part of the 6th French Army, distinguished themselves by clearing the 'Brigade de Marine' Woods and the village of Vaux of the enemy and arresting his offensive on the Marne and at Fossoy.

"Since then they have taken the most glorious part in the second battle of the Marne, rivalling the French troops in ardour and valour.

"During twenty days of constant fighting they have freed numerous French villages and made, across a difficult country, an advance of forty kilometres, which has brought them to the Vesle.

"Their glorious marches are marked by names which will shine in future in the military history of the United States: Torcy, Belleau, Plateau d'Etrepilly, Epieds, Le Charmel, l'Ourcq, Seringeset Nesles, Sergy, La Vesle and Fismes.

"These young divisions, who saw fire for the first time, have shown themselves worthy of the old war traditions of the regular army. They have had the same burning desire to fight the Boche, the same discipline which sees that the order given by their commander is always executed, whatever the difficulties to be overcome and the sacrifices to be suffered.

"The magnificent results obtained are due to the energy and the skill of the commanders, to the bravery of the soldiers.

"I am proud to have commanded such troops."

Through the month of August and up to the first days of September, the Americans participated in the impor-

tant operations to the north of Soissons, where on August 29th they played a big part in the capture of the Juvigny Plateau.

In this fighting, which was marked by the desperate resistance of the enemy, the Americans were incorporated in the 10th French Army under the command of General Mangin. Violent counter attacks by German shock divisions failed to stem the persistent advances of our forces.

A large hill to the north of Juvigny constituted a key and supporting position for the enemy. In spite of the large number of machine guns concealed on its slopes, the Americans succeeded in establishing a line between the hill and the town. At the same time the American line extended itself around the other side of the hill. With the consummation of this enveloping movement, the hill was taken by assault.

On Labor Day, September 2nd, after bitterly engaging four German divisions for five days, the Americans advanced their lines to Terny-Sorny and the road running between Soissons and St. Quentin. This achievement, which was accomplished by driving the Germans back a depth of four miles on a two mile front, gave our forces a good position on the important plateau running to the north of the Aisne.

Our observation stations now commanded a view across the valley toward the famous Chemin des Dames which at one time had been a part of the Hindenburg line. Before the invasion of the German hordes, France possessed no fairer country-side than the valley of the Aisne. But the Germans, retreating, left behind them only wreckage and ashes and ruin. The valley spread out before our lines was scarred with the shattered remains of what had once been peaceful farming com-

munities. To the northwest there could be seen the spires above the city of Laon.

The American units which took part in this bitter fighting that had continued without a day's cessation since July 18th, were mentioned specifically in an order issued on August 27th by General Pershing. The order read:

"It fills me with pride to record in general orders a tribute to the service achievements of the First and Third Corps, comprising the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Twenty-sixth, Twenty-eighth, Thirty-second and Forty-second Divisions of the American Expeditionary Forces.

"You came to the battlefield at a crucial hour for the Allied cause. For almost four years the most formidable army the world has yet seen had pressed its invasion of France and stood threatening its capital. At no time has that army been more powerful and menacing than when, on July 15th, it struck again to destroy in one great battle the brave men opposed to it and to enforce its brutal will upon the world and civilisation.

"Three days later in conjunction with our Allies you counter-attacked. The Allied armies gained a brilliant victory that marks the turning point of the war. You did more than to give the Allies the support to which, as a nation, our faith was pledged. You proved that our altruism, our pacific spirit, and our sense of justice have not blunted our virility or our courage.

"You have shown that American initiative and energy are as fit for the tasks of war as for the pursuits of peace. You have justly won unstinted praise from our Allies and the eternal gratitude of our countrymen.

"We have paid for our successes with the lives of

many of our brave comrades. We shall cherish their memory always and claim for our history and literature their bravery, achievement and sacrifice.

"This order will be read to all organisations at the first assembly formations following its receipt.

"PERSHING."

August 10th marked a milestone in the military effort of the United States. On that day the organisation was completed of the First American Field Army. I have tried to show in this record how we began the organisation of our forces overseas. Our first troops to reach France were associated in small units with the French. Soon our regiments began to reach the front under French Division Commanders. Then with the formation of American divisions, we went into the line under French corps commanders. Later still, American corps operated under French Army Commanders. Finally, our forces augmented by additional divisions and corps were organised into the First American Field Army.

Through these various stages of development, our forces had grown until on August 10th they had reached the stage where they became practically as independent an organisation as the British armies under Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig and the French armies under General Petain. From now on the American Army was to be on a par with the French Army and the British Army, all three of them under the sole direction of the Allied Generalissimo, Marshal Ferdinand Foch.

The personnel of this, the greatest single army that ever fought beneath the Stars and Stripes, is reproduced in the appendix. It might not be amiss to point out that an American division numbers thirty thousand men

and that an American corps consists of six divisions and auxiliary troops, such as air squadrons, tank sections, and heavy artillery, which bring the strength of an American army corps to between 225,000 and 250,000 men. By the 1st of September, the United States of America had five such army corps in the field, martialling a strength of about one and one-half million bayonets. General Pershing was in command of this group of armies which comprised the First American Field Army.

It was from these forces that General Pershing selected the strong units which he personally commanded in the first major operation of the First American Field Army as an independent unit in France. That operation was the beginning of the Pershing push toward the Rhine—it was the Battle of St. Mihiel.

It was a great achievement. It signalised the full development of our forces from small emergency units that had reached the front less than a year before, to the now powerful group of armies, fighting under their own flag, their own generals, and their own staffs.

The important material results of the Battle of St. Mihiel are most susceptible to civilian as well as military comprehension. The St. Mihiel salient had long constituted a pet threat of the enemy. The Germans called it a dagger pointed at the heart of eastern France. For three years the enemy occupying it had successfully resisted all efforts of the Allies to oust them.

The salient was shaped like a triangle. The apex of the triangle—the point of the dagger—thrusting southward, rested on the town of St. Mihiel, on the river Meuse. The western flank of the triangle extended northward from St. Mihiel to points beyond Verdun. The eastern flank of the triangle extended in a north-

easterly direction toward Pont-à-Mousson. It was the strongest position held by the Germans in Lorraine—if not on the entire front.

The geographical formation of the salient was an invitation for the application of a pincers operation. The point of leverage of the opposing jaws of the pincers was, most naturally, the apex of the triangle at St. Mihiel.

One claw of the pincers—a claw some eight miles thick, bit into the east side of the salient near Pont-à-Mousson on the west bank of the Moselle River. The other claw of the pincers was about eight miles thick and it bit into the western flank of the salient in the vicinity of the little town of Haudiomont, on the heights of the Meuse and just a little distance to the east of the Meuse River.

The distance across that part of the salient through which the pincer's claws were biting was about thirty miles, and the area which would be included in the bite would be almost a hundred and seventy-five square miles. This, indeed, was a major operation.

The battle began at one o'clock on the morning of September 12th, when the concentrated ordnance of the heaviest American artillery in France opened a preparatory fire of unprecedented intensity.

At five o'clock in the dim dawn of that September morning, our infantry waves leaped from their trenches and moved forward to the assault. The claw of the pincers on the eastern flank of the salient began to bite in.

One hour later the claw of the pincers on the western flank of the salient began to move forward.

On the east, our men went forward on the run over ground that we had looked upon with envious eyes from the day that the first American troops reached the front.

Before noon we had taken the villages of Lahayville, St. Baussant, Vilcey and the Bois de Mortmare and we were still advancing. By nightfall, our lines were still on the move beyond Essey and we were holding the important town of Thiaucourt and claimed Villers sur Penny for our own.

The seemingly impregnable fortress of Mont Sec had been surrounded, our tanks had cleared the way through Pannes, we had taken Nonsard and the towns of Woinville and Buxières had fallen into our hands.

On the west side of the salient the day had gone equally well for us. The western claw of the pincers had pushed due east through the towns of Spada and Lavigneville. Our men had swept on in the night through Chaillon, we had taken St. Remy and had cleared the Forêt de Montagne. By midnight their advanced patrols had reached the western part of the town of Vigneulles. In the meantime, our forces on the eastern side of the salient were pushing westward toward this same town of Vigneulles. At three o'clock in the morning the forces from the east were occupying the eastern part of the town. The pincers had closed; the St. Mihiel salient had been pinched off.

Our forces actually met at nine o'clock on the morning of September 13th. The junction was made at the town of Heudicourt to the south of Vigneulles. We had pocketed all of the German forces to the south of that town. Our centre had moved forward at nine o'clock the night before and occupied St. Mihiel on the heels of the retreating Germans. But the withdrawal was too late. Large numbers of them found themselves completely surrounded in the forests between St. Mihiel on the south and Heudicourt on the north.

We closed in during the afternoon and started to open

the prize package. Located in the area, encircled by our troops, was the Bois de Versel, the Bois de Gaumont and the Bois de Woeuvre. Each one of these little forests gave up its quota of prisoners, while much material and rich booty of war fell into our hands.

The principal avenue that had been opened for the Germans to make a possible withdrawal led through Vigneulles and before our pincers had completely closed, the fleeing enemy had poured out through that gap at the rate of several thousand an hour. The roads were blocked for miles with their transportation, and when the American artillery turned its attention to these thoroughfares, crowded with confused Germans, the slaughter was terrific. For days after the battle our sanitation squads were busy at their grewsome work.

In conception and execution the entire operation had been perfect. Confusion had been visited upon the method-loving enemy from the beginning. By reason of the disruption of their intercommunications, faulty liaison had resulted and division had called to division in vain for assistance, not knowng at the time that all of them were in equally desperate straits. The enemy fought hard but to no purpose.

One entire regiment with its commander and his staff was captured. With both flanks exposed, it had suddenly been confronted by Americans on four sides. The surrender was so complete that the German commander requested that his roll should be called in order to ascertain the extent of his losses. When this was done, every one was accounted for except one officer and one private.

As his command was so embarrassingly complete, the German commander asked permission to march it off in whatever direction desired by his captors. The request was granted, and there followed the somewhat amusing

spectacle of an entire German regiment, without arms, marching off the battlefield under their own officers. The captured regiment was escorted to the rear by mounted American guards, who smilingly and leisurely rode their horses cowboy fashion as they herded their captives back to the pens.

Tons upon tons of ammunition fell into our hands in the woods. At one place twenty-two railroad cars loaded with large calibre ammunition had to be abandoned when an American shell had torn up the track to the north of them. But if the Germans had been unable to take with them their equipment, they had succeeded in driving ahead of them on the retreat almost all of the French male civilians between sixteen and forty-five years that had been used as German slaves for more than four years.

The Americans were welcomed as deliverers by those French civilians that remained in the town. They were found to be almost entirely ignorant of the most commonly known historical events of the war. Secretary of War Baker and Generals Pershing and Petain visited the town of St. Mihiel a few hours after it was captured. They were honoured with a spontaneous demonstration by the girls and aged women, who crowded about them to express thanks and pay homage for deliverance.

One of our bands began to play the "Marseillaise" and the old French civilians who, under German domination, had not heard the national anthem for four long years, broke down and wept. The mayor of the town told how the Germans had robbed it of millions of francs. First they had demanded and received one million five hundred thousand francs and later they collected five hundred thousand more in three instalments. In addition to these robberies, they had taken by "requisition"

all the furniture and mattresses and civilian comforts that they could find. They took what they wanted and usually destroyed the rest. They had stripped the towns of all metal utensils, bells, statues, and water pipes.

The St. Mihiel salient thus went out of existence. The entire point in the blade of the dagger that had been thrust at the heart of France had been bitten off. Verdun with its rows upon rows of sacred dead was now liberated from the threat of envelopment from the right. The Allies were in possession of the dominating heights of the Meuse. The railroads connecting Commercy with Vigneulles, Thiaucourt and St. Mihiel were in our hands. Our lines had advanced close to that key of victory, the Briey iron basin to the north, and the German fortress of Metz lay under American guns.

The battle only lasted twenty-seven hours. In that space of time, a German force estimated at one hundred thousand had been vanquished, if not literally cut to pieces, American soldiers had wrested a hundred and fifty square miles of territory away from the Germans, captured fifteen thousand officers and men and hundreds of guns. General Pershing on September 14th made the following report:

"The dash and vigour of our troops, and of the valiant French divisions which fought shoulder to shoulder with them, is shown by the fact that the forces attacking on both faces of the salient effected a junction and secured the result desired within twenty-seven hours.

"Besides liberating more than 150 square miles of territory and taking 15,000 prisoners, we have captured a mass of material. Over 100 guns of all calibres and hundreds of machine guns and trench mortars have been taken.

"In spite of the fact that the enemy during his retreat burned large stores, a partial examination of the battlefield shows that great quantities of ammunition, telegraph material, railroad material, rolling stock, clothing, and equipment have been abandoned. Further evidence of the haste with which the enemy retreated is found in the uninjured bridges which he left behind.

"French pursuit, bombing and reconnaissance units, and British and Italian bombing units divided with our own air service the control of the air, and contributed materially to the successes of the operation."

And while this great battle was in progress, the Allied lines were advancing everywhere. In Flanders, in Picardy, on the Marne, in Champagne, in Lorraine, in Alsace, and in the Balkans the frontier of freedom was moving forward.

Surely the tide had turned. And surely it had been America's God-given opportunity to play the big part she did play. The German was now on the run. Suspicious whisperings of peace began to be heard in neutral countries. They had a decided German accent. Germany saw defeat staring her in the face and now, having failed to win in the field, she sought to win by a bluff at the peace table.

The mailed fist having failed, Germany now resorted to cunning. The mailed fist was now an open palm that itched to press in brotherhood the hands of the Allies. But it was the same fist that struck down the peace of the world in 1914. It was the same Germany that had ravished and outraged Belgium. It was the same Germany many that had covered America with her net of spies and that had tried to murder France. It was the same Ger- had sought to bring war to our borders with Mexico and

Japan. It was the same Germany that had ruthlessly destroyed the lives of women and children, American citizens, non-combatants, riding the free seas under the protection of the Stars and Stripes. It was the same Germany that had drugged Russia with her corrupting propaganda and had throttled the voice of Russian democracy. This Germany, this unrepentant Germany—this unpunished Germany, launched her drive for peace.

Germany was willing to make any concessions to bring about negotiations that would save her from a defeat in the field. There was one thing, however, that Germany wanted to save from the ruin she had brought down upon herself. That thing was the German army and its strong auxiliary, the German navy. Neither one of them had been destroyed. The army was in general retreat and the navy was locked up in the Baltic, but both of them remained in existence as menaces to the future peace of the world. With these two forces of might, Germany could have given up her booty of war, offered reparation for her transgressions and drawn back behind the Rhine to await the coming of another *Der Tag* when she could send them once more crashing across friendly borders and cruising the seven seas on missions of piracy.

Germany was in the position of a bully, who without provocation and without warning had struck down from behind a man who had not been prepared to defend himself. The victim's movements had been impeded by a heavy overcoat. He had been utterly and entirely unprepared for the onslaught. The bully had struck him with a club and had robbed him.

The unprepared man had tried to free himself from the overcoat of pacifism that he had worn so long in safety and in kindliness to his fellows. The bully, taking advantage of his handicap, had beaten him brutally. At

last the unprepared man had freed himself from the overcoat and then stood ready not only to defend himself, but to administer deserved punishment. Then the bully had said:

"Now, wait just a minute. Let's talk this thing over and see if we can't settle it before I get hurt."

The bully's pockets bulge with the loot he has taken from the man. The victim's face and head are swollen and bloody and yet the bully invites him to sit down to a table to discuss the hold-up, the assault, and the terms of which the loot and the loot only will be returned. The bully takes it for granted that he is to go unpunished and, more important still, is to retain the club that he might decide to use again.

The rule of common sense that deals with individuals should be the same rule that applies to the affairs of nations. No municipal law anywhere in the world gives countenance to a compromise with a criminal. International law could be no less moral than municipal law. Prussian militarism made the world unsafe for Democracy, and for that reason, on April 6th, 1917, the United States entered the war.

We wanted a decent world in which to live. And the existence of the Prussian army and its conscienceless masters was incompatible with the free and peaceful life of the world. We entered the war for an ideal. That ideal was in the balance when Germany made her 1918 drive for peace.

Our army in France knew that if peace came with an unwhipped Prussian army in existence, the world would be just as unsafe for Democracy as it had ever been. Our army in France wanted no compromise that would leave Germany in possession of the instruments that had made possible her crimes against the world. Every man

that had shed blood, every man that had paid the final price, every woman that had shed tears, every cherished ideal of our one hundred and forty years of national life, would have been sacrificed in vain, if we had condoned Germany's high crimes against civilisation and had made a compromise with the criminal.

Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, spokesman of the Allied world, sounded the true American note when, in his reply to the insincere German peace proposals, he referred the German Government to Marshal Foch, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied armies. War by the sword was to bring peace by the sword.

And as I write these lines in the last days of October, 1918, unconditional surrender is the song of the dove of peace perched on our bayonets as we march into the dawn of victory.

APPENDIX

PERSONNEL OF THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES IN FRANCE

1ST ARMY CORPS

Major Gen. Hunter Liggett, commanding.

1st and 2nd Division, Regular Army; 26th, (New England), 32d, (Michigan and Wisconsin), 41st, (Washington, Oregon, North and South Dakota, Colorado, New Mexico, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Minnesota), and 42d (*Rainbow*, troops from twenty-six States) Divisions, National Guard.

1ST DIVISION—Major Gen. Charles P. Summerall, commanding; Lieut. Col. Campbell King, Chief of Staff; Major H. K. Loughry, Adjutant General.
1ST BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Major John L. Hines; 16th and 18th Regiments; 2d Machine Gun Battalion.
2D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Major Gen. Beaumont B. Buck; 26th and 28th Regiments; 3d Machine Gun Battalion.
1ST BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—(Commanding officer not announced); 5th, 6th, and 7th Regiments; 1st Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—1st Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—2nd Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—1st Machine Gun Battalion.

2ND DIVISION (U. S. M. C.)—Brig. Gen. John E. Le Jeune, commanding; Brig. Gen. Preston Brown, Chief of Staff.
3RD BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Hanson E. Ely; 9th and 23rd Regiments; 5th Machine Gun Battalion.
4TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY (MARINES)—Brig. Gen. John E. Le Jeune; 5th and 6th Regiments; 6th Machine Gun Battalion.
2D BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig Gen. A. J. Bowley; 12th, 15th, and 17th Regiments; 2d Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—2d Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—1st Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—2d Division Headquarters Troops; 4th Machine Gun Battalion.

26TH DIVISION—Major Gen. Clarence R. Edwards, commanding; Lieut. Col. Cassius M. Dowell, Chief of Staff; Major Charles A. Stevens, Adjutant General.

51ST BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. George H. Shelton; 101st and 102d Regiments; 102d Machine Gun Battalion.

52D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. C. H. Cole; 103d and 104th Regiments; 103d Machine Gun Battalion.

51ST BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. D. E. Aultman; 101st Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—101st Regiment.

SIGNAL TROOPS—101st Field Battalion.

DIVISION UNITS—26th Headquarters Troop; 101st Machine Gun Battalion.

32ND DIVISION—Major Gen. W. G. Haan, commanding; Lieut. Col. Allen L. Briggs, Chief of Staff; Major John H. Howard, Adjutant General.

63D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. William D. Connor; 125th and 126th Regiments; 120th Machine Gun Battalion.

64TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. E. B. Winans; 127th and 128th Regiments; 121st Machine Gun Battalion.

57TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. G. LeRoy Irwin; 119th, 120th and 121st Regiments; 107th Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—107th Regiment.

SIGNAL TROOPS—107th Battalion.

DIVISION UNITS—32d Headquarters Troops; 119th Machine Gun Battalion.

41ST DIVISION (*Sunset*)—Major. Gen. Robert Alexander, commanding; Colonel Harry H. Tebbetts, Chief of Staff; Major Herbert H. White, Adjutant General.

81ST BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Wilson B. Burt; 161st and 162nd Regiments; 147th Machine Gun Battalion.

82D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Edward Vollrath; 163rd and 164th Regiments; 148th Machine Gun Battalion.

66TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—(Commanding officer not announced); 146th, 147th, and 148th Regiments; 116th Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—116th Regiment.

SIGNAL TROOPS—116th Battalion.

DIVISION UNITS—41st Division Headquarters Troop; 146th Machine Gun Battalion.

42D DIVISION (*Rainbow*)—Major Gen. C. T. Menoher, commanding; (Chief of Staff not announced); Major Walter E. Powers, Adjutant General.

83D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. M. Lenihan; 165th and 166th Regiments; 150th Machine Gun Battalion.
84TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. R. A. Brown; 167th and 168th Regiments; 151st Machine Gun Battalion.
67TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. G. C. Gatley; 149th, 150th and 151st Regiments; 117th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—117th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—117th Field Signal Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—42d Division Headquarters Troop; 149th Machine Gun Battalion.

2ND ARMY CORPS

Major Gen. Robert Lee Bullard, Commanding.

4th Division, Regular Army; 28th, (Pennsylvania,) 30th, (Tennessee, North and South Carolina, and District of Columbia), and 36th (Missouri and Kansas) Divisions, National Guard; 77th (New York) and 82d (Georgia, Alabama, and Florida) Divisions, National Army.

4TH DIVISION—Major Gen. George H. Cameron, commanding; Lieut. Col. Christian A. Bach, Chief of Staff; Major Jesse D. Elliott, Adjutant General.
7TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. B. A. Poore, 39th and 47th Regiments; 11th Machine Gun Battalion.
8TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. E. E. Booth; 58th and 59th Regiments; 12th Machine Gun Battalion.
4TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. E. B. Babbitt; 13th, 16th and 77th Regiments; 4th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—4th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—8th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—4th Division Headquarters Troop; 10th Machine Gun Battalion.

28TH DIVISION—Major Gen. C. H. Muir, commanding; (Chief of Staff not announced); Lieut. Col. David J. Davis, Adjutant General.
55TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. T. W. Darrah; 109th and 110th Regiments; 108th Machine Gun Battalion.
56TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Major Gen. William Weigel; 111th and 112th Regiments; 109th Machine Gun Battalion.
53RD BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. W. G. Price, 107th,

108th, and 109th Regiments; 103rd Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—103d Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—103d Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—28th Division Headquarters Troop; 107th Machine Gun Battalion.

30TH DIVISION (*Wild Cat*)—Major Gen. Edward M. Lewis, commanding; Lieut. Col. Robert B. McBride, Chief of Staff; Lieut. Col. Francis B. Hinkle, Adjutant General.
59TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Lawrence D. Tyson; 117th and 118th Regiments; 114th Machine Gun Battalion.
60TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Samuel L. Faison; 119th and 120th Regiments; 115th Machine Gun Battalion.
55TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—(Commanding officer not announced); 113th, 114th and 115th Regiments; 105th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—105th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—165th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—30th Division Headquarters Troop; 113th Machine Gun Battalion.

35TH DIVISION—Major Gen. Peter E. Traub, commanding; Colonel Robert McCleave, Chief of Staff; Major J. M. Hobson, Adjutant General.
69TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Nathaniel McClure; 137th and 138th Regiments; 129th Machine Gun Battalion.
70TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Charles I. Martin; 139th and 140th Regiments; 130th Machine Gun Battalion.
60TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. L. G. Berry; 128th, 129th, and 130th Regiments; 110th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—110th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—35th Division Headquarters Troop; 128th Machine Gun Battalion.

77TH DIVISION (Upton)—Major Gen. George B. Duncan, commanding; (Chief of Staff not announced); Major W. N. Haskell, Adjutant General.
153D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Edward Wittenmeyer; 205th and 306th Regiments; 305th Machine Gun Battalion.
154TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Evan M. Johnson; 307th and 308th Regiments; 306th Machine Gun Battalion.
152D BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Reeves; 304th, 305th and 306th Regiments; 302d Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—302d Regiment.

Signal Troops—302d Battalion.
Division Units—77th Division Headquarters Troop; 304th Machine Gun Battalion.

82D DIVISION—Major Gen. W. P. Burnham, commanding; Lieut. Col. Royden E. Beebe, Chief of Staff; Lieut. Col. John R. Thomas, Adjutant General.
163d Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. Marcus D. Cronin; 325th and 326th Regiments; 320th Machine Gun Battalion.
164th Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. Julian R. Lindsay; 327th and 328th Regiments; 321st Machine Gun Battalion.
157th Brigade, Field Artillery—Brig. Gen. Charles D. Rhodes; 319th, 320th and 321st Regiments; 307th Trench Mortar Battery.
Engineer Troops—307th Regiment.
Signal Troops—307th Battalion.
Division Units—319th Machine Gun Battalion.

3D ARMY CORPS

Major Gen. William M. Wright, commanding.

3d and 5th Divisions, Regular Army; 27th (New York) and 33d (Illinois) Divisions, National Guard; 78th (Delaware and New York) and 80th (New Jersey, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and District of Columbia) Divisions, National Army.

3D DIVISION—Major Gen. Joseph T. Dickman, commanding; Colonel Robert H. Kelton, Chief of Staff; Captain Frank L. Purndon, Adjutant General.
5th Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. F. W. Sladen; 4th and 7th Regiments; 8th Machine Gun Battalion.
8th Brigade, Infantry—(Commanding officer not announced); 30th and 38th Regiments; 9th Machine Gun Battalion.
3d Brigade, Field Artillery—Brig. Gen. W. M. Cruikshank; 10th, 76th and 18th Regiments; 3d Trench Mortar Battery.
Engineer Troops—6th Regiment.
Signal Troops—5th Battalion.
Division Units—3d Division Headquarters Troop; 7th Machine Gun Battalion.

5TH DIVISION—Major Gen. John E. McMahon, commanding; Colonel Ralph E. Ingram, Chief of Staff; Major David P. Wood, Adjutant General.
9th Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. J. C. Castner; 60th and 61st Regiments; 14th Machine Gun Battalion.

10TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Major Gen. W. H. Gordon; 6th and 11th Regiments; 15th Machine Gun Battalion.
5TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. C. A. F. Flagler; 19th, 20th, and 21st Regiments; 5th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—7th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—9th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—5th Division Headquarters Troop; 13th Machine Gun Battalion.

27TH DIVISION (New York)—Major Gen. J. F. O'Ryan, commanding; Lieut. Col. Stanley H. Ford, Chief of Staff; Lieut. Col. Frank W. Ward, Adjutant General.
53D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Alfred W. Bjornstad; 105th and 106th Regiments; 105th Machine Gun Battalion.
54TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Palmer E. Pierce; 107th and 108th Regiments; 106th Machine Gun Battalion.
52ND BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. George A. Wingate; 104th, 105th and 106th Regiments; 102d Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—102d Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—102d Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—27th Division Headquarters Troop; 104th Machine Gun Battalion.

33D DIVISION—Major Gen. George Bell, Jr., commanding; Colonel William K. Naylot, Chief of Staff; (Adjutant General not announced).
65TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Edward L. King; 129th and 130th Regiments; 123d Machine Gun Battalion.
66TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Paul A. Wolff; 131st and 132nd Regiments; 124th Machine Gun Battalion.
58TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. James A. Shipton; 122d, 123d and 124th Regiments; 108th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—108th Battalion.
SIGNAL TROOPS—108th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—33d Division Headquarters Troop; 112th Machine Gun Battalion.

78TH DIVISION—Major Gen. James H. McRae, commanding; Lieut. Col. Harry N. Cootes; Chief of Staff; Major William T. MacMill, Adjutant General.
155TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Mark L. Hersey; 309th and 310th Regiments; 308th Machine Gun Battalion.

156TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. James T. Dean; 311th and 312th Regiments; 309th Machine Gun Battalion.
153D BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. Clint C. Hearn; 307th, 308th and 309th Regiments; 303d Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—303d Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOP—303d Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—78th Division Headquarters Troop; 307th Machine Gun Battalion.

80TH DIVISION—Major Gen. Adelbert Cronkhite, commanding; Lieut. Col. William H. Waldron, Chief of Staff; Major Steven C. Clark, Adjutant General.
159TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. George H. Jamerson, 317th and 318th Regiments; 314th Machine Gun Battalion.
160TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Lloyd M. Bratt; 319th and 320th Regiments; 315th Machine Gun Battalion.
155TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. Gordon G. Heiner; 313th, 314th and 315th Regiments; 305th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—305th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—305th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—80th Division Headquarters Troop; 313th Machine Gun Battalion.

4TH ARMY CORPS

Major Gen. George W. Read, commanding.

83d (Ohio and Pennsylvania), 89th (Kansas, Missouri South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona), 90th (Texas and Oklahoma), and 92d (negro troops) Divisions, National Army; 37th (Ohio) and 29th (New Jersey, Virginia, Delaware, Maryland and District of Columbia) Divisions, National Guard.

29TH DIVISION—Major Gen. C. G. Morton, commanding; Colonel George S. Goodale, Chief of Staff; Major James A. Ulio, Adjutant General.
57TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Charles W. Barber; 113th and 114th Regiments; 111th Machine Gun Battalion.
58TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. H. H. Bandholtz; 115th and 116th Regiments; 112th Machine Gun Battalion.
54TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—(Commanding officer not announced) 110th, 111th and 112th Regiments; 104th Trench Mortar Battery.

Engineer Troops—104th Regiment.
Signal Troops—104th Battalion.
Division Units—29th Division Headquarters Troop; 110th Machine Gun Battalion.

37TH DIVISION—Major Gen. C. S. Farnsworth, commanding; Lieut. Col. Dana T. Merrill, Chief of Staff; Major Edward W. Wildrick, Adjutant General.
73rd Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. C. F. Zimmerman; 145th and 146th Regiments; 135th Machine Gun Battalion.
74th Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. W. P. Jackson; 147th and 148th Regiments; 136th Machine Gun Battalion.
62d Brigade, Field Artillery—(Commanding officer not announced); 134th, 135th and 136th Regiments; 112th Trench Mortar Battery.
Engineer Troops—112th Regiment.
Signal Troops—112th Battalion.
Division Units—37th Division Headquarters Troop; 134th Machine Gun Battalion.

83RD DIVISION—Major Gen. E. F. Glenn, commanding; Lieut. Col. C. A. Trott, Chief of Staff; Major James L. Cochran, Adjutant General.
165th Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. Ora E. Hunt; 329th and 330th Regiments; 323d Machine Gun Battalion.
166th Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. Malin Craig; 331st and 332d Regiments; 324th Machine Gun Battalion.
158th Brigade, Field Artillery—Brig. Gen. Adrian S. Fleming; 322d, 323d, and 324th Regiments; 308th Trench Mortar Battery.
Engineer Troops—308th Regiment.
Signal Troops—308th Battalion.
Division Units—83d Division Headquarters Troop; 322d Machine Gun Battalion.

89TH DIVISION—Brig. Gen. Frank L. Winn, commanding; (Acting) Colonel C. E. Kilbourne, Chief of Staff; Major Jerome G. Pillow, Adjutant General.
177th Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. Frank L. Winn; 353rd and 354th Regiments; 341st Machine Gun Battalion.
178th Brigade, Infantry—Brig. Gen. Thomas G. Hanson; 355th and 356th Regiments; 342d Machine Gun Battalion.
164th Brigade, Field Artillery—Brig. Gen. Edward T. Donnelly; 340th, 341st and 342d Regiments; 314th Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—314th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—314th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—80th Division Headquarters Troop; 340th Machine Gun Battalion.

90TH DIVISION—Major Gen. Henry T. Allen, commanding; Colonel John J. Kingman, Chief of Staff; Major Wyatt P. Selkirk, Adjutant General.
179TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. John T. O'Neill; 357th and 358th Regiments; 344th Machine Gun Battalion.
180TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. W. H. Johnston; 359th and 360th Regiments; 345th Machine Gun Battalion.
165TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. Francis C. Marshall; 343d, 344th, and 345th Regiments; 315th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—315th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—315th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—90th Division Headquarters Troop; 349th Machine Gun Battalion.

92ND DIVISION—Major Gen. C. C. Ballou, commanding; Lieut. Col. Allen J. Greer, Chief of Staff; Major Sherburne Whipple, Adjutant General.
183D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Malvern H. Barnum, 365th and 366th Regiments; 350th Machine Gun Battalion.
184TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. W. A. Hay; 367th and 368th Regiments; 351st Machine Gun Battalion.
167TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—(Commanding officer not announced); 349th, 350th and 351st Regiments; 317th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—317th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—317th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—92d Division Headquarters Troop; 349th Machine Gun Battalion.

5TH ARMY CORPS

Major Gen. Omar Bundy, commanding.

6th Division, Regular Army; 36th (Texas and Oklahoma) Division, National Guard; 75th (New England), 79th (Pennsylvania, Maryland and District of Columbia), 85th (Michigan and Wisconsin), and 91st (Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Cali-

fornia, Idaho, Nevada, Montana, Wyoming and Utah), Divisions, National Army.

6TH DIVISION—Brig. Gen. James B. Erwin, commanding; Colonel James M. Pickering, Chief of Staff; Lieut. Col. Robert S. Knox, Adjutant General.
11TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. W. R. Dashiell; 51st and 52d Regiments; 17th Machine Gun Battalion.
12TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. J. B. Erwin; 53d and 54th Regiments; 18th Machine Gun Battalion.
6TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. E. A. Millar; 3rd, 11th, and 78th Regiments; 6th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—318th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—6th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—6th Division, Headquarters Troop; 16th Machine Gun Battalion.

36TH DIVISION—Major Gen. W. R. Smith, commanding; Colonel E. J. Williams, Chief of Staff; Major William R. Scott, Adjutant General.
71ST BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Henry Hutchings; 141st and 142d Regiments; 132d Machine Gun Battalion.
72D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. John A. Hulen; 143d and 144th Regiments; 133d Machine Gun Battalion.
61ST BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. John A. Stevens; 131st, 132d and 133d Regiments, 111th Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—111th Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—111th Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—36th Division Headquarters Troop; 131st Machine Gun Battalion.

76TH DIVISION—Major Gen. Harry F. Hodges, commanding; (Chief of Staff not announced); Major George M. Peek, Adjutant General.
151ST BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Frank M. Albright; 301st and 302d Regiments; 302d Machine Gun Battalion.
152D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. F. D. Evans; 303d and 304th Regiments; 303d Machine Gun Battalion.
151ST BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Major Gen. William S. McNair; 301st, 302d, and 303d Regiments; 301st Trench Mortar Battery.
ENGINEER TROOPS—301st Regiment.
SIGNAL TROOPS—301st Battalion.
DIVISION UNITS—76th Division Headquarters Troop; 301st Machine Gun Battalion.

79TH DIVISION—Major Gen. Joseph E. Kuhn, commanding; Colonel Tenny Ross, Chief of Staff; Major Charles B. Moore, Adjutant General.

157TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. William L. Nicholson; 313th and 314th Regiments; 311th Machine Gun Battalion.

158TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—(Commanding officer not announced); 315th and 316th Regiments; 312th Machine Gun Battalion.

154TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. Andrew Hero, Jr., 310th, 311th and 312th Regiments; 304th Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—304th Regiment.

SIGNAL TROOPS—304th Battalion.

DIVISION UNITS—79th Division Headquarters Troop; 310th Machine Gun Battalion.

85TH DIVISION—Major Gen. C. W. Kennedy, commanding; Colonel Edgar T. Collins, Chief of Staff; Lieut. Col. Clarence Lininger, Adjutant General.

169TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Thomas B. Dugan; 337th and 338th Regiments; 329th Machine Gun Battalion.

170TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—(Commanding officer not announced); 339th and 340th Regiments; 330th Machine Gun Battalion.

160TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. Guy M. Preston; 328th, 329th and 330th Regiments; 310th Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—310th Regiment.

SIGNAL TROOPS—310th Battalion.

DIVISION UNITS—85th Division Headquarters Troop; 328th Machine Gun Battalion.

91ST DIVISION—Brig. Gen. F. H. Foltz, commanding; Colonel Herbert J. Brees, Chief of Staff; Major Frederick W. Manley, Adjutant General.

181ST BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. John B. McDonald; 361st and 362d Regiments; 347th Machine Gun Battalion.

182D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Frederick S. Foltz; 363d and 364th Regiments; 348th Machine Gun Battalion.

166TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. Edward Burr; 346th, 347th and 348th Regiments; 316th Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—316th Regiment.

SIGNAL TROOPS—316th Battalion.

DIVISION UNITS—91st Division Headquarters Troop; 346th Machine Gun Battalion.

UNASSIGNED TO CORPS

81ST DIVISION—Major Gen. C. J. Bailey, commanding; Colonel Charles D. Roberts, Chief of Staff; Major Arthur E. Ahrends, Adjutant General.

161ST BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. George W. McIver; 321st and 322nd Regiments; 317th Machine Gun Battalion.

162D BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. Monroe McFarland; 323d and 324th Regiments; 318th Machine Gun Battalion.

156TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—Brig. Gen. Andrew Moses; 316th, 317th and 318th Regiments; 306th Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—306th Regiment.

SIGNAL TROOPS—306th Battalion.

DIVISION UNITS—81st Division Headquarters Troop; 316th Machine Gun Battalion.

93RD DIVISION—(Commander not announced); Major Lee S. Tillotson, Adjutant General.

185TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—(Commanding officer not announced); 369th and 370th Regiments; 333d Machine Gun Battalion.

186TH BRIGADE, INFANTRY—Brig. Gen. George H. Harries; 371st and 372d Regiments; 334th Machine Gun Battalion.

168TH BRIGADE, FIELD ARTILLERY—(Commanding officer not announced); 332d, 333d and 334th Regiments; 318th Trench Mortar Battery.

ENGINEER TROOPS—318th Regiment.

SIGNAL TROOPS—318th Battalion.

DIVISION UNITS—332d Machine Gun Battalion.

HEADQUARTERS THIRD ARMY CORPS
American Expeditionary Forces,
France, July 17, 1918.

MEMORANDUM:

The Third Corps of the American Expeditionary Forces has been created and consists of the 1st and 2nd Divisions, two divisions that are known throughout France.

Officers and men of the Third Corps, you have been deemed worthy to be placed beside the best veteran French troops. See that you prove worthy. Remember that in what is now coming you represent the whole American nation.

R. L. BULLARD,
Major General,
Commanding 3rd Corps.

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PRÉSIDENCE DU CONSEIL

COMMISSARIAT GÉNÉRAL
DES AFFAIRES DE GUERRE
FRANCO-AMÉRICAINES

Paris, le 16 août 1918. 191

G.I.P.

1917

Cher Monsieur GIBBONS.

LE GENERAL PETAIN me fait connaître que la CROIX DE GUERRE FRANÇAISE avec palme, vous a été conférée.

Je suis heureux de vous féliciter de cette décoration que vous avez si bien méritée par votre courage et votre dévouement professionnel.

Agréez, Cher Monsieur GIBBONS, l'assurance de mes sentiments très distingués./.

Monsieur FLOYD GIBBONS,
Correspondant du CHICAGO TRIBUNE,
aux bons soins du Lieutenant JEAN POZZI,
Hôtel de la Sirène,
MEAUX.

Paris, August 8, 1918.

Dear Mr. Gibbons,

General Petain has notified me that the French War Cross, with one palm, has been conferred upon you.

I take pleasure in congratulating you upon this decoration which you have so well merited by your courage and your devotion to duty.

Accept, dear Mr. Gibbons, the assurance of my profound regard.